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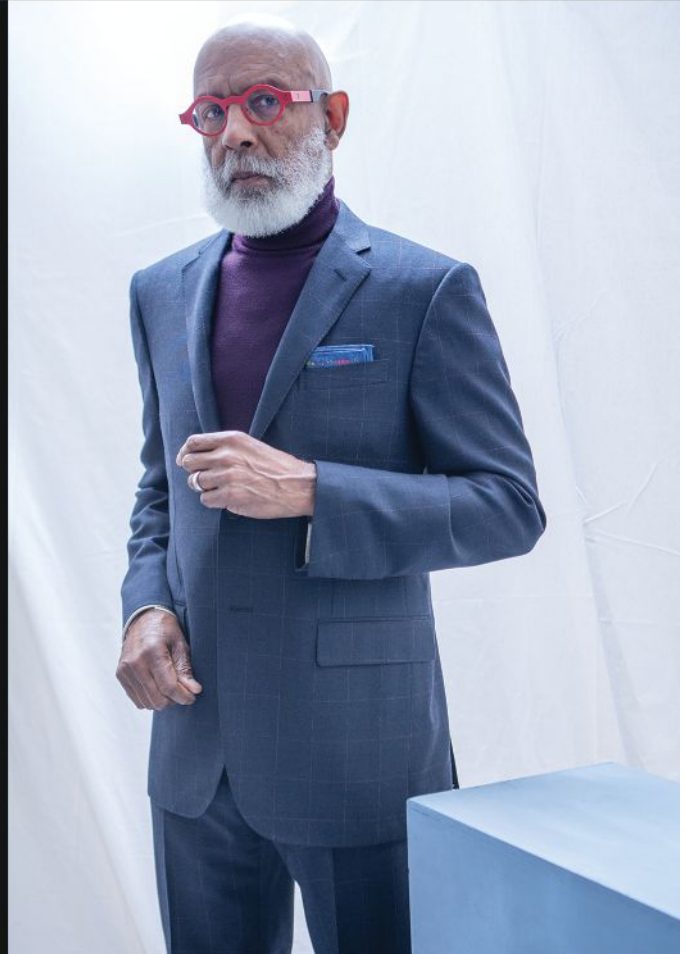
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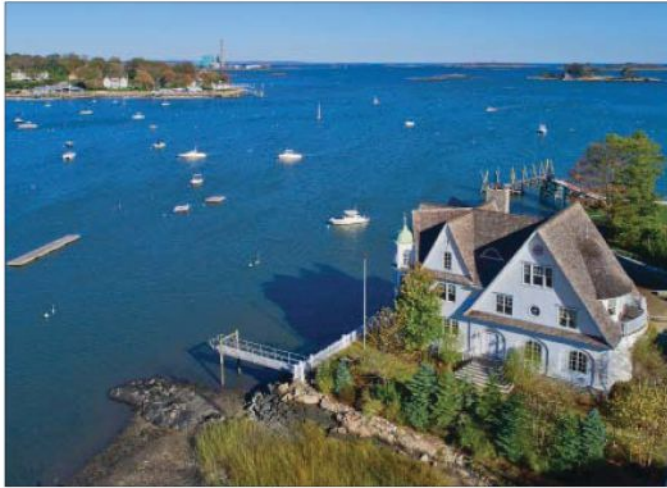


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Cover design: Alyson Bowman; Matt Wick, head chef at Osa in Middletown; photo by Jeff Kaufman.

This page: (top) A coal fire at Butchers & Bakers in Farmington; photo by Mathieu Jean.

(above) Middletown's Daneyah Martinez sleds down Foss Hill at Wesleyan University in Middletown; photo by Catherine Avalone.

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CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL Connecticut Magazine® (ISSN 0889-7670), a property of Hearst Connecticut Media Group, 100 Gando Drive, New Haven, CT 06513-1014, is published monthly by Connecticut Magazine at 100 Gando Drive, New Haven, CT 06513. Periodicals postage paid at New Haven, Connecticut, and at additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: One year \$19.97, two years \$34.97, three years \$39.97 in Connecticut; out-of-state residents add \$5/yr. **POSTMASTER:** Send changes of address to Connecticut Magazine Subscription Services, P.O. Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834.

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Food Fantasies

Few things get us more excited than food. In fact, one of the central questions we face each day at the office is where to get lunch.

No issue better represents this love affair more than January. It's when we unveil our annual menu of Best Restaurants, with two massive lists (page 65). In Readers' Choice, we leave the decision-making to you, as we simply tally up online votes and see which restaurants are the most popular. For Experts' Picks, we turn to our staff dining enthusiasts as well as a select group of foodies and critics from around the state to come up with a list that represents the best of the best of the Connecticut dining scene.

When it comes to good food, we're firm believers in the concept of more is better. So we've expanded both lists to include more categories than ever, from best chef and bartender to best bakery and coffee shop.

It's also a fitting time to point out some recent changes in our Connecticut Table dining section. In an effort to keep you posted about the freshest restaurant news, we've doubled the size of our roundup of recent restaurant openings, as well as moved it from the Dining Guide listings section to a more visible home in Table.

Another change to Table is Under the Radar, which looks not at new restaurants, but high-quality establishments that haven't received the notice or praise they deserve. You can think about them as best-kept secrets, but we don't think they should be. Finally, a rebranded Craft Cruising explores the latest developments in the state's craft-beverage industry, including new breweries, wineries and distilleries.

If you love food even half as much as we do, you're going to want to sink your teeth into this issue.



Albie Yuravich

ayuravich@connecticutmag.com

Follow me on Twitter and Instagram   @AlbertYuravich

Correction: Two of the holiday recipes for the health conscious, "Sugared Down" in our December issue on page 86, were missing ingredient amounts. For the choco-loco crunch squares, use a half-cup of shredded, unsweetened coconut. And for the apple cranberry chia gummy bites, use a generous third-cup of chia seeds.

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Bank Heists Don't Pay Off

DESPITE CONTINUED FREQUENT BANK ROBBERIES IN CONNECTICUT, TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES MEAN FEWER CRIMINALS GET AWAY WITH IT

BY GARY STOLLER



BONEZBOY Z/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

Notorious bank robbers have been highly publicized — and often glamorized — throughout American history. The names Jesse James, Butch Cassidy, Pretty Boy Floyd, Baby Face Nelson, John Dillinger and Willie Sutton are legendary, and their lore sometimes grew as long as Pinocchio's nose.

Today's bank robbers may not get as many headlines or have the allure of the thieves from bygone days, but they pull off thousands of heists every year throughout the country. Even in these days of high-tech cybercrime, thieves still make off with millions of dollars from banks, credit unions, armored cars and other businesses the old-fashioned way, according to the FBI.

An average of nearly 12 banks were robbed daily in the U.S. in 2016, and one bank was robbed every five days in Connecticut, according to *Connecticut Magazine's* analysis of FBI statistics.

Those numbers may sound alarming, but the good news locally is that no one has been killed or seriously injured in a Connecticut bank robbery in at least 11 years, according to New Haven-based special agent Lisa McNamara, who investigated such crimes for the FBI during those years.

Nationally, violent acts were committed at banks in 146 of 4,251 robberies, burglaries and larcenies in 2016, killing one bank employee and causing 35 injuries, FBI statistics reveal. Seven robbers were killed, and eight were injured.

McNamara says bank robbery is a crime with one of the highest apprehension rates — about 80 percent of robbers in Connecticut are apprehended.

"If you are going to rob a bank in Connecticut, there's a very high likelihood you are going to jail," McNamara says.

So, despite the obvious risks, why do robbers keep heading for a bank?

"I've been told by bank robbers," security consultant Chris McGoeys says, "that it's the perception of a big payoff compared to robbing a convenience store or fast-food outlet."

In reality, though, most robbers usually target one teller and leave a bank as quickly as possible with a small amount of money, says Frank Teti, president of the Connecticut Bankers Reward Association, which offers money to people who provide information leading to the apprehension of bank robbers. A teller's drawer could contain a "couple of thousand" dollars, he says.



Surveillance image of an armed robbery at the People's Bank in the Stop & Shop in Shelton in May 2017.

McGoey says robbers are also attracted to banks because they "appear to be soft targets without security guards," and tellers "are trained to cooperate fully with a robber's demands and hand over the money." "Robbers like it when they don't have to use force and don't have to worry about tellers pulling a gun on them."

Most bank robbers in Connecticut, McNamara says, are addicted to drugs, alcohol or gambling, and, unlike years ago, "we are seeing people with mental health problems robbing banks." Last year (2017) was uncommon, she says, because, through mid-November, five women had robbed banks, up from the usual one or two per year.

One was Courtney Worthington, 29, of West Haven, who was arrested in January at an East Haven hotel and pleaded guilty in July to committing three robberies in January and December 2016. She admitted that she robbed a TD Bank in West Haven on Dec. 19, 2016, a People's United Bank in Woodbridge on Jan. 2, 2017, and a TD Bank in Killingworth on Jan. 5.

Today's bank robbers may not get as many headlines or have the allure of the thieves from bygone days, but they pull off thousands of heists every year throughout the country.



Police respond to a robbery at the Chase Bank in the Riverside section of Greenwich in April 2017. PHOTO: TYLER SIZEMORE

During each robbery, Worthington handed a teller a note containing threats and demanding money, the U.S. Department of Justice says. She faces a maximum 20-year prison term.

Most robbers pass a note demanding money and do not use a firearm, and their robberies take less than two minutes, McNamara says. A getaway vehicle is usually involved, and robbers sometimes have an unsuspecting taxi or Uber driver waiting.

On Nov. 14, after reviewing surveillance images and talking to a taxi driver who drove an alleged bank robber to a local hotel, New Haven Police detectives arrested Andre Edwards, 40, of Hamden. He was charged with passing a note to tellers demanding cash at three different New Haven-area banks on Nov. 6, 11 and 13.

There were 72 bank robberies in 2016 in Connecticut, and the same number through mid-November 2017. The annual number fluctuated between 56 and 108 from 2003-16, and guns are used in 20 or fewer of the heists each year, McNamara estimates.

Robberies that police say occurred in 2017 include:

- A robber wearing a sling and holding a handgun got away with more than \$11,000 from People's United Bank in Monroe on Sept. 14. A Trumbull man, Joseph Grosso, 33, was arrested

more than a month later for allegedly committing the crime.

- A Newtown man allegedly handed a teller a note saying he had a gun and robbed \$833 from a local Bank of America branch Aug. 24. Newtown police say John McCarthy, 63, left the bank on foot and was carrying a large knife when he was arrested across the street outside a paint store.
- A fitness enthusiast and model was arrested May 3 in California and charged with three Greenwich robberies in April. David Byers, 34, of Solana Beach, California, allegedly robbed a Chase bank in Riverside on consecutive days and a gas station in Cos Cob.
- Robert Abel, 54, of St. Augustine, Florida, pleaded guilty Nov. 6 to robbing \$1,517 from a Webster Bank in Stratford on Feb. 17. He faces a maximum prison term of 20 years, and his sentencing is set for later this month.

According to the U.S. Justice Department, Abel also admitted to last February robbing \$733 from a McDonald's restaurant in East Palm Coast, Florida, and a CVS in St. Augustine, and stealing a woman's car in South Carolina. Then, the Justice Department says, he tried to rob a

Walgreens pharmacy in Stratford and left without any money, before his arrest by Milford Police on Feb. 17.

Technological advancements, McGoey says, have made it more difficult to pull off a bank robbery without being caught.

"The quality of digital video surveillance cameras is far superior to those used in the past," he says. "Color digital images of robbers can be extracted immediately from the footage and disseminated within minutes to every law enforcement agency and the media."

In bags of stolen money, banks place GPS tracking devices and exploding dye packs that stain the cash and the robber. Many dye packs are supplemented by tear gas that is triggered by an electromagnetic field near a bank's exit door and can immobilize a perpetrator, according to the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, a nonprofit organization that provides information to address crime problems.

Sometimes the technology can go awry. In 2010, four employees at the Liberty Bank in Mystic needed emergency medical care when a dye pack exploded in a vault and released tear gas.

But technological advancements have also helped robbers.

"Bank robbers are using the same old tactics, but have the advantage of cellphone

technology for texting by lookouts, and cellphone video for planning purposes,” McGoeys says. “Otherwise, banks are still a box with mostly female tellers and staff that appear to offer little resistance to mostly male perpetrators.”

Of 4,900 people known to be involved in robberies, burglaries and larcenies at banks, credit unions and armored carrier companies throughout the U.S. in 2016, 4,529 were male, according to FBI statistics. About 44 percent were black, 37 percent were white and 5 percent were Latino.

The FBI has detailed information about 2,537 of those involved, and the information shows that 40 percent were narcotics users and 27 percent had been previously convicted of bank-related robberies, burglaries and larcenies.

Bank robbers may often be looking for money for a weekend getaway. FBI statistics show that robberies at banks happen more frequently on Fridays than on other days, and more frequently between 9-11 a.m. than during other time periods.

The number of annual bank robberies throughout the country rose from 3,866 in 2014 to 4,002 in 2015 and 4,168 in 2016, but the numbers are substantially smaller than in past decades. More than 7,400 robberies occurred in 2003, and more than 9,500 in 1992.

The number of robberies has dropped because of “a number of factors, including better security at the bank,” says Sarah Grano, a spokeswoman for the American Bankers Association. “Banks invest heavily in sophisticated alarm systems, bait money and surveillance cameras to help deter and catch robbers. Improved investigative techniques, tougher sentencing and the shift to electronic transactions have also contributed to the drop-off in robberies.”



Surveillance photo of a robbery at the Webster Bank on Connecticut Avenue in Norwalk in 2016.

McGoey suggests other steps to deter would-be bank robbers. Banks should reduce the amount of cash on hand that’s immediately accessible to tellers and install at the bank entrance “a highly visible video camera” that makes visitors aware their images are being recorded. “Many robbers scope out the location in advance, and their unmasked image is captured, giving them something to worry about,” McGoeys says.

The security consultant also suggests testing “a time-delay system” that requires people with large cash demands to wait minutes for a machine to dispense the money. “This has worked in the convenience store industry,” McGoeys says. “The bank industry rejected this idea, because it causes the robber to stay inside longer, and the robber may get antsy. The time-delay safe could also trigger a hold-up alarm.”

Dick Cross, a former vice president and chief security officer for the Bank of New York in Manhattan, says banks need to reduce the number of entrances and station an unarmed guard at the front entrance to greet everyone coming in. The guard, he says, may deter someone who is casing the bank for a future robbery attempt.

Some Connecticut banks have armed guards, but Cross, Teti and McNamara are

not proponents of such a security measure. They express concern that innocent lives or bystanders could be wounded or killed. Teti believes the number of robberies in Connecticut in the future will not decrease substantially, because robbers “know bank employees are trained to do what the robber says. They know employees are not going to fight them, and they probably get more money from banks than from a mom-and-pop store.”

Connecticut bankers, Teti says, have a very good relationship working with the FBI, which has had a primary role in bank robberies since 1934, when it became a federal crime to rob any national bank or state member bank of the Federal Reserve System. The FBI, though, usually defers to local law enforcement authorities to conduct the bulk of the investigations, and Teti says he would like to see more, and better, communication between banks and local agencies.

McNamara applauds local and state law enforcement authorities for their work in robbery investigations and credits the public and the media for the apprehension of many suspects. “We can’t do it without those partners,” McNamara says. “We need the public. The public solves a lot of our bank robberies that are not solved early on.”

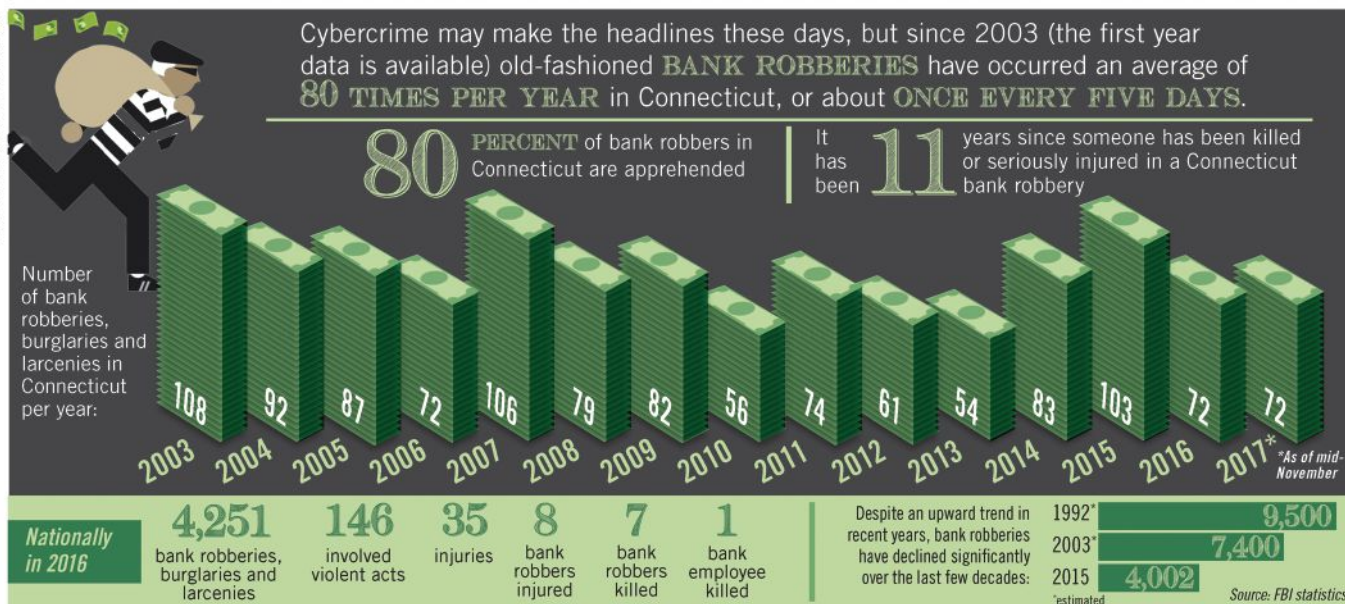
Will there ever be a solution to end all bank robberies?

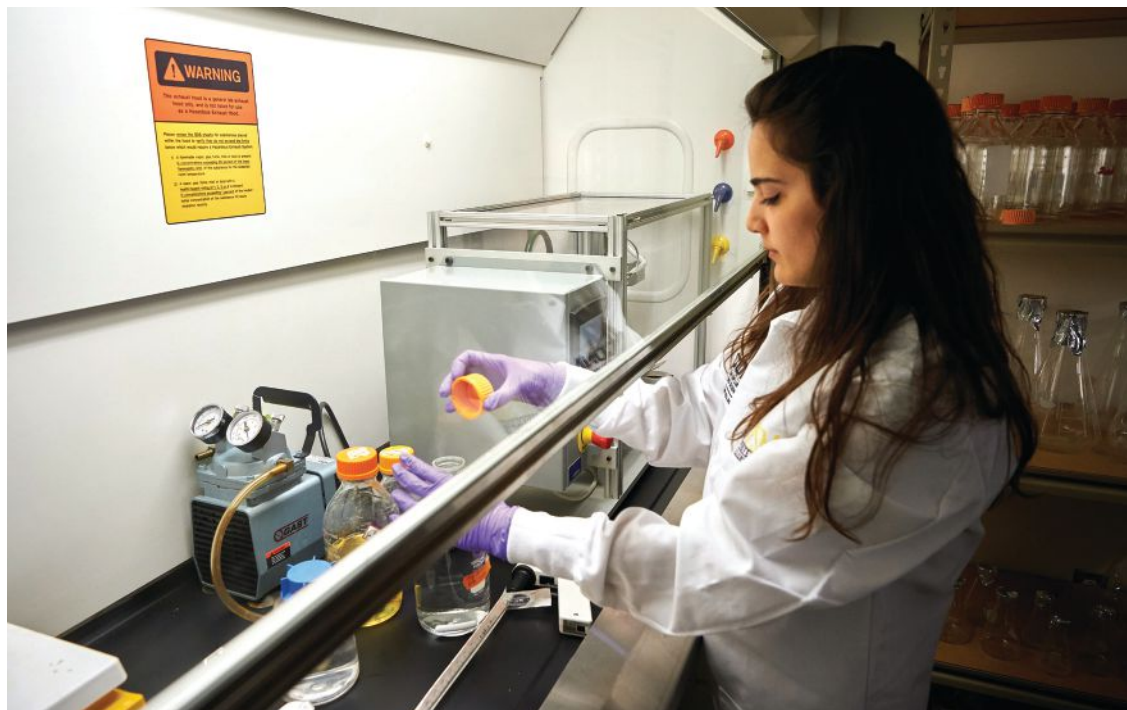
“We’ll always have bank robberies,” Cross says. “It’s not going to stop.”

McNamara agrees. “As long as banks have money, they are going to get robbed.”

McGoey has some parting advice, though, for would-be bank robbers planning a heist, particularly those with a partner or partners. “Your co-robbers will rat you out when caught,” he says. “Crime doesn’t pay. Get a real job!”

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Research technician Didem Ozcam works at the hood in the lab at LambdaVision at the Cell and Genome Sciences Building in Farmington.

Below: An example of the retinal implants under development at Lambavision.

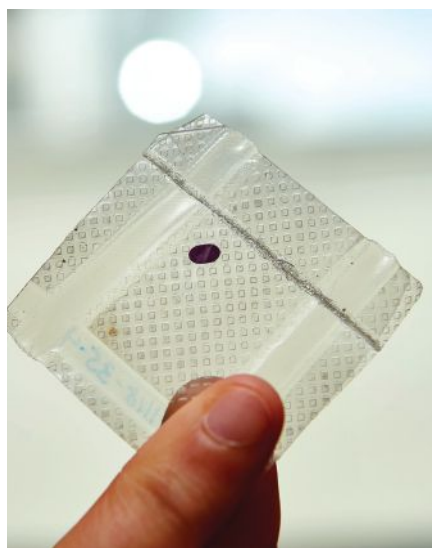
PHOTOS: PETER MORENUS/
UCONN

Vision is the Mission

FARMINGTON COMPANY'S QUEST TO CURE BLINDNESS SET TO LAUNCH INTO ORBIT

BY MIKE WOLLSCHLAGER

Human beings have been aboard the International Space Station continuously now for over 17 years. Crews spend months orbiting the Earth, privy to some of the most breathtaking views in the universe. But what exactly are they working on while hurtling through space? A few months from now the answer to that question will be provided by LambdaVision, a Farmington company that has developed a retinal implant to restore vision to those afflicted with age-related macular degeneration



(AMD) and retinitis pigmentosa (RP).

We first reported on LambdaVision in August 2014 when co-founder, President and CEO Nicole Wagner and her partners secured \$225,000 in funding to support their breakthrough in the fight against AMD — the leading cause of blindness for people 55 and older — and RP, a genetic disorder that can wipe out vision by age 40. Recognition for LambdaVision has grown, and that dollar amount has as well: funding is now up to \$2.4 million.

"You go to pitch to [venture capitalists] and they'll say 'you're too early' or 'you're too late for us.' If you [believed them] every time you heard that you'd stop right away," Wagner says. "We've been that success story where people say 'I believe in you.'"

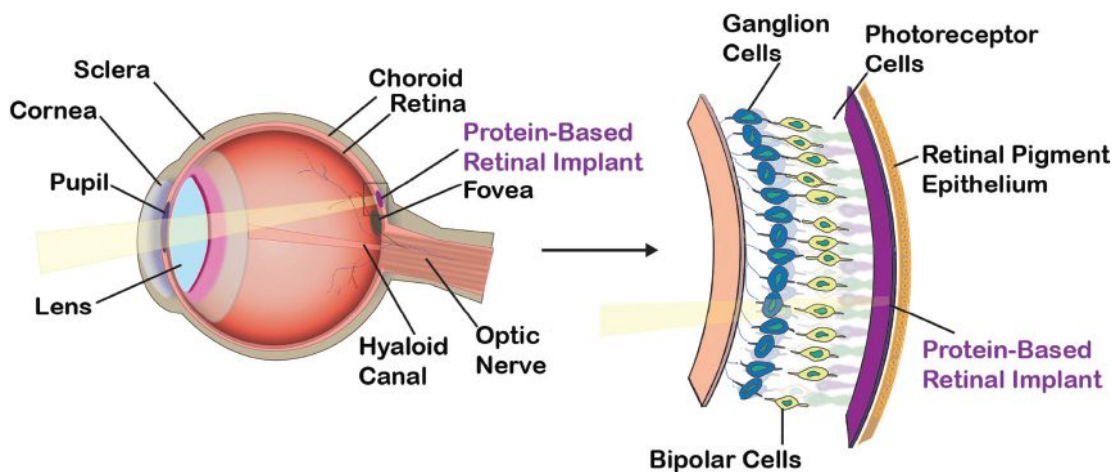
LambdaVision began with Robert Birge, the Schwenk Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at UConn who retired in May 2016. He came up with the concept of using a light-activated protein, bacteriorhodopsin, to stimulate the retina of people suffering from AMD and RP.

"The foundation [of LambdaVision] was the 35-40 years of research that was done by Robert Birge, who was the founder of the technology and our research adviser when we were graduate students," says chief scientific officer Jordan Greco, who has worked side by side with Wagner since the company's launch in 2009. "He's still

involved in what we're doing now, but he moved out to Colorado with his wife and family. I think it has been difficult for him to kind of walk away from being involved, at least in the everyday sense."

This summer Birge may be able to sneak an occasional peek at his life's work flying overhead in the Colorado sky. LambdaVision received the CASIS-Boeing Award in November 2016 through startup accelerator MassChallenge, which affords it the opportunity to conduct experiments on the implant, or film, on the space station, in zero gravity. The launch is scheduled for May. "What it is that we're trying to answer is tied to the manufacturing of the films," Greco says. "We dip a film into a series of beakers, and then repeat that hundreds of times so that we have the eventual product. Throughout that process there's a few important parameters that we need to control. ... On the space station we're moving gravity out of the equation, so we're reducing sedimentation and aggregation of the proteins that are used in the solutions ... leading to more stable films with better performance."

Wagner, who estimates the MassChallenge prize is worth about \$7 million in resources, and her team of six have proven they know their way around a lab. But a space odyssey is a different story. So LambdaVision is working in



cooperation with Space Tango, a company based in Lexington, Kentucky, for the mission. "They're the ones who are miniaturizing the device into this cube, basically a very small cube, and once it's on the space station they insert it into their framework and press 'go.' They have control on Earth, and can run the software and run the experiments," Greco says.

The implants that are produced during the roughly three months in space will be transported back to Earth by SpaceX. The goal then is to look at the quality of the implants. "We have a period of time where

we'll run these experiments to test the stability, to look at the quality, and really understand the difference and what the improvement was," Greco says.

Testing of the implant on rats began in October and pigs are up next, while testing on humans is still two or three years away. Admittedly that timeframe is not soon enough for some. "We've met a lot of people who are suffering or have family members that have these diseases and that makes it personal," Greco says. "We get phone calls, emails from people wanting to know more about the company, wanting to understand

where we are in our commercialization path, when they can get into clinical trials. Seeing that, hearing that definitely makes it personal and does motivate us to want to make this happen faster, as fast as we can."

Wagner says the goal is to target patients who are completely blind first. LambdaVision anticipates there will be at least a \$1.5 billion market for RP alone.

"This technology, when [Birge] started it, he had no idea where it would turn out or what would happen," Greco says. "And 35 years later we're using this to restore vision." lambdavis.com



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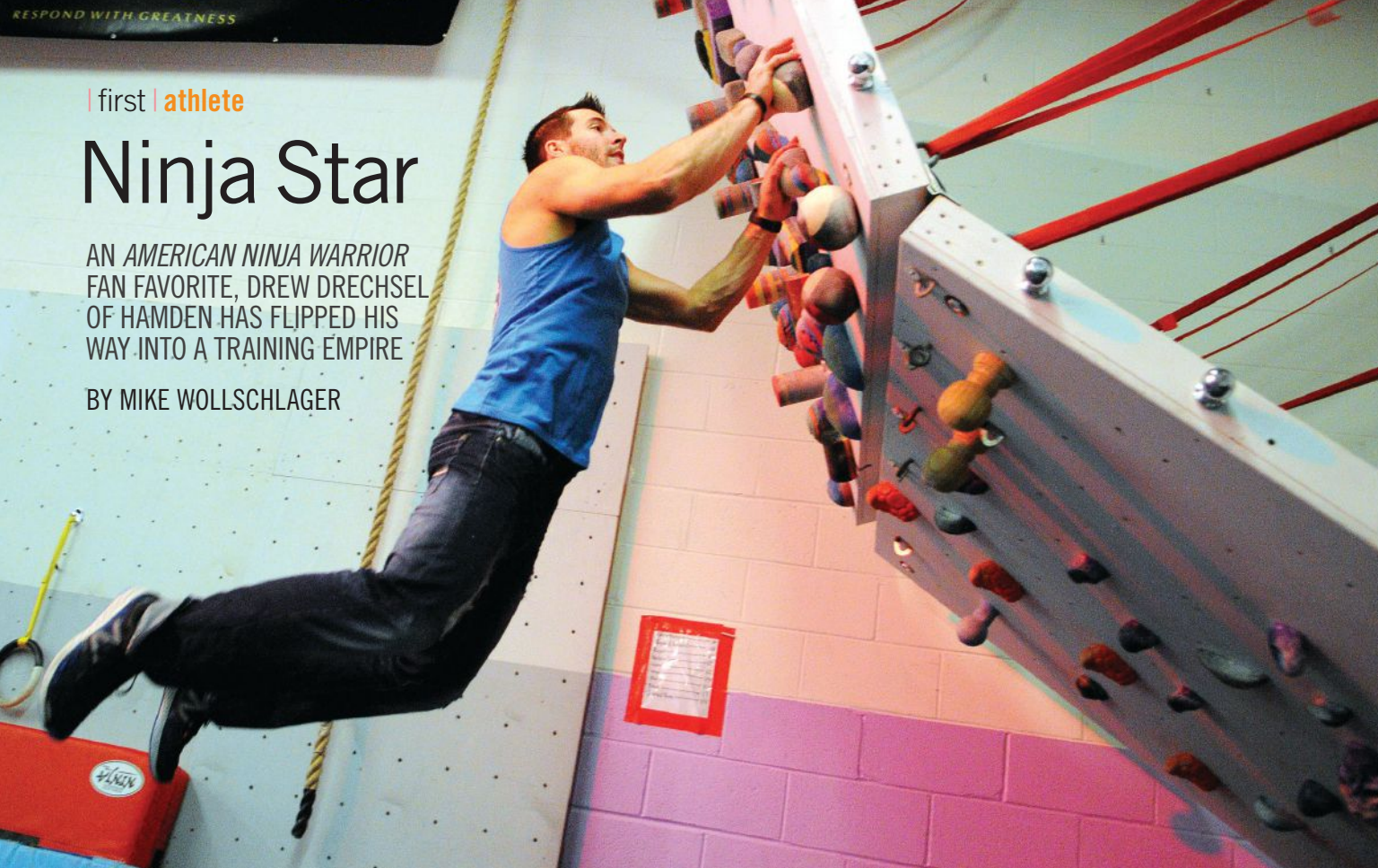
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Ninja Star

AN *AMERICAN NINJA WARRIOR* FAN FAVORITE, DREW DRECHSEL OF HAMDEN HAS FLIPPED HIS WAY INTO A TRAINING EMPIRE

BY MIKE WOLLSCHLAGER



Children learn many important things in school. Little bricks of knowledge and information come together to form the foundation on which a future is built. Drew Drechsel learned his biggest lesson one day in high school when he was 15. He just happened to be backflipping off a vending machine at the time.

"Oh, parkour! That's so cool! I didn't know you did that!" a fellow student exclaimed.

"That was the first time I ever heard the word 'parkour,'" the 28-year-old star of NBC's *American Ninja Warrior* says of the sport in which you run, climb and leap your way through an obstacle course as fast as you can. The South Florida native nicknamed "Real Life Ninja" now calls Hamden home and says his Sherman Avenue gym is the first Ninja Warrior-only facility of its kind. But it all started with parkour, or more accurately, the 2004 Summer Olympics.

"I was watching men's gymnastics,

watching them all flip around. I was like, I wanna do that. I wanna learn how to backflip," Drechsel says. "So I dragged my mattress down the stairs into my backyard, and after two days I'm doing backflips. ... I was 15 years old — you *know* I'm doing them at school, you *know* I'm showing off to all my friends. I'm flipping off vending machines." That night he went on YouTube and watched parkour videos.

After high school he moved to Gainesville, got a job on a used car lot and worked out a deal with a mixed martial

arts gym to teach after-hours lessons in parkour and freerunning (a form of parkour in which acrobatic flourishes are added for effect). His exploits landed him spots in the World Parkour Championships and on the TV show *Jump City: Seattle*. He debuted on *American Ninja Warrior* during season 3 in 2011 and has appeared on each subsequent season. In 2016 Drechsel was the top-ranked ninja in both the U.S. and Japan, and he is considered one of the most successful foreigners ever to compete on *Sasuke*, the Japanese TV show that served as the

Top: Drew Drechsel demonstrates his skills at New Era Ninjas in Hamden.

Opposite page: Drechsel oversees one of the classes at the Sherman Avenue facility.

PHOTOS: CHRISTIAN ABRAHAM





inspiration for the American version. Season 10 will be filmed between March and June and broadcast on NBC this summer.

Connecticut has been Drechsel's home since he moved to Fairfield in 2014 when an opportunity arose to help run events and competitions at the Gymnastics and Cheerleading Academy of Connecticut. While at a GCA event, a parent told Drechsel about a guy named Tom Alberti. "I caught wind of someone here in Hamden who wanted to open a Ninja Warrior-only facility, and that's something that has never happened before," Drechsel says. "There's been gymnastics gyms with ninja, there's been parkour gyms with ninja. ... I wanted to have the first Ninja Warrior-only facility." Drechsel called Alberti, owner of New Era Gym, and set up a meeting. A couple of months later, in the spring of 2015, Drechsel opened New Era Ninjas in a secondary building on the property and started running birthday parties and enrolling people in classes.

"After a year and a half, we completely filled [the original] space," Drechsel says. "We had no more room for any more kids to come to classes. ... We were turning away more people than were actually in classes." The interest in the program is not difficult to understand. It's a unique after-school activity for kids and a fun alternative to treadmills for adults. The large building's single room is splashed with colorful mats, rings, bars, ramps and trampolines that provide infinite athletic possibilities to the creative mind. And then there's Savage, Drechsel's pet hedgehog who's always a hit with the kids. But make no mistake: Drew is the draw.

"NBC has constantly highlighted me, every year," Drechsel says. "They say good things about me and I do good things on the show, so it definitely helps. And people come here and they see what's going on and their kids love it." When interacting

with kids Drechsel takes on a role akin to a responsible older brother, the type who teaches you something new or helps you work through a problem. The students have an obvious respect for Drechsel, but he gives it right back.

"I think he's a really good teacher," says Michael Sherman, 9, of Redding. "I've never had a better one." And what about Drechsel's chances on the upcoming season of *American Ninja Warrior*? "I think he's

the strongest ninja in the world. I think he's gonna win season 10."

He might be the strongest, but he's definitely the busiest. Despite buying out its neighbors and doubling its size, New Era Ninjas is full again with 360 kids and 80 adults signed up for weekly one-hour sessions. Drechsel also offers private meet-and-greets with families.

About a year ago, Drechsel opened Real Life Ninja Academy, a 10,000-square-foot facility in Windsor where he was able to hire fellow ninjas to teach. "[The ninjas] are doing what they love to do. Supplying ninjas with jobs, giving little ninjas a place to train; everybody just wins." Not coincidentally Drechsel navigates the business aspect of his life like an obstacle course as well, deftly moving from one thing to the next. "We're opening more gyms. We've got another location we're looking at in Arizona right now." Drechsel also owns the Real Life Ninja Equipment Line, which can be found in gyms all over the country.

"Most people, they grew up and they learned how to adult and they stopped being a kid," Drechsel says. "Well, even though I learned how to adult I still went and played around on monkey bars, I still jumped around, I still climbed trees, because it was fun."

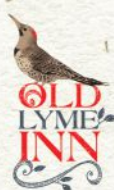
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Sandra Marchant shows off her medal from the 2016 national championships in Texas.

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Living by the Sword

PROSPECT'S SANDRA MARCHANT IS ONE OF THE TOP FENCERS IN THE COUNTRY

BY ERIK OFGANG

Sandra Marchant was losing.

It was the North American Cup fencing championships in Minneapolis in 2014. Marchant was competing in the final round in the over-40 division against Ann Totemeier. Marchant had fallen behind 9 touches to 6. It was a 10-touch bout, which meant that if her opponent landed one more strike with her weapon, Marchant would lose.

During a break in the bout Marchant told her coach that she was just happy to have made it that far and was going to have fun and go all out.

As the fight resumed, Marchant moved toward Totemeier. Marchant beat her opponent's blade with an attack high and to the inside and dropped down and hit her in her flank below her sword arm. Marchant scored a touch.

Still down 9-7 and with nothing to lose, Marchant tried the same move again, and then again, successfully scoring two more touches with it, and tying the score at 9.

As action resumed, she tried the move one final time. As she did she heard someone yell "touch," and knew the bout was over, but was unsure who had won.



"I thought she hit me," Marchant recalls. "I look over and it was my light that was on. I couldn't believe that I made the touch. I flipped the mask off. I screamed and I literally fell to the stage. I was crying, I was so happy."

Describing the contest one morning in November at Spill The Beans coffeeshop in Prospect, Marchant, a mother of three, picks up a spoon and jabs it forward as though it's a sword. Marchant is demonstrating a move from the fight, but as her arm darts with trained precision, she is simultaneously displaying something else: her unabashed and infectious love of fencing.

Marchant is ranked as one of the top three over-40 female fencers in the country. She regularly competes on the tournament circuit and has amassed an impressive collection of medals. In addition, Marchant is a full-time fencing instructor and ardent missionary for the sport. She teaches at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, the Prospect Fencing Club, Greens Farms Academy in Westport, the Fairfield Fencing Academy and for homeschool groups. She also works to bring attention to fencing through outrageous publicity stunts and photo shoots she does with her friend Alexander Turoff, who teaches fencing in New York.

Last summer Turoff and Marchant



donned Tyrannosaurus rex outfits. They then posed with their weapons on top of a float in front of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor (above). Marchant and Turoff have also done photo shoots in front of Bannerman Castle on the Hudson River, and high above the ground on home ropes courses, in a real-world recreation of the swashbuckling scenes from pirate movies.


It's all part of Marchant's effort to bring attention to fencing and encourage others to share in its joys.

Surprisingly, Marchant didn't begin fencing until she was in her mid-20s when

she happened to hear that her parents' accountant, Edgar Sanchez, taught the sport at Quinnipiac University. Sanchez invited Marchant to attend a class. Something clicked inside her when she was there.

"This is the only time this has ever happened in my life," she says. "I picked up the weapon and the lights got brighter, and I could hear music in my head. It was one thing I knew I had to do."

Marchant is a lifelong fan of Star Wars and Wonder Woman, and fencing gave her the chance to have her own "lightsaber" fights and take down



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THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

opponents like a superhero. At a time when Marchant had a baby daughter, was going through a divorce and struggling with social skills, fencing became her outlet.

She began training privately with Ralph Spinella, a Quinnipiac fencing instructor and former Olympian. She would train for an hour and a half, seven days a week. Marchant couldn't pay for the training, so she bartered with Spinella. "I worked my lessons off; I cleaned his house, I reupholstered his furniture," Marchant says.

She went on to win many awards on the fencing circuit. Along the way she remarried and had two more children. Her oldest daughter, Lauren Richards, is a student at the University of Rhode Island. Her son, AJ, is 15 and on the fencing team at his high school and her daughter, Morgan, practices fencing for fun. Marchant says her husband, Albert, is incredibly supportive of her passion.

This is good because Marchant isn't ready to sheath her weapon anytime soon. She still competes regularly and, when she turns 50 in three years, hopes to join the senior USA team and compete at the World Cup.

"I want a world medal," she says.

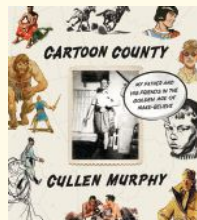
In the meantime, she continues to train every day. She also does all she can to encourage others to take up the sport no matter their age. She says it's a way of cheating exercise because it's so enjoyable. "What's not fun about hitting your friends and thinking you're any superhero you want to be?" she says. "You can be anyone you want to be behind the mask." ■

| the reading room |

CARTOON COUNTY: MY FATHER AND HIS FRIENDS IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF MAKE-BELIEVE

By Cullen Murphy
Farrar, Straus and Giroux
272 pages, 2017

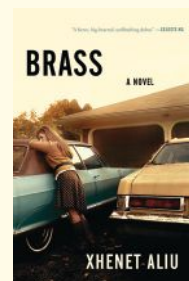
Connecticut, and more specifically Fairfield County, used to be the cartoon capital of the world. In the 1950s and '60s many famous comic book artists lived in Fairfield County including Mort Walker (*Beetle Bailey*), Bud Sagendorf (*Popeye*), Stan Drake (*Blondie*), Charles Saxon (who did more than 90 covers for *The New Yorker*) and John Cullen Murphy, editor at large of *Vanity Fair* and the artist behind *Big Ben Bolt* and *Prince Valiant*. In this new work, Cullen Murphy, son of John Cullen Murphy, who collaborated with his father on *Prince Valiant*, chronicles these cartooning giants with a healthy dose of heartfelt and fascinating nostalgia. The book also is, quite fittingly, a beautiful collection of images from the comic strips so many grew up reading. | ERIK OFGANG |



BRASS: A NOVEL

By Xhenet Aliu
Random House
295 pages, 2018

Xhenet Aliu's debut novel is about what happened to people and romances and dreams when the factories in and around Waterbury closed for good. There's an irony hinted at in the title. They call deindustrialized America the Rust Belt. But proper brass, the stuff they made in Waterbury, doesn't actually rust. When everything turns to rust, what happens to that which doesn't rust? The novel is almost startling in its honesty, in its rawness. It's focused around the lives of the Albanian and Lithuanian communities in Waterbury, told through parallel stories of a mother and daughter set 17 years apart. When something or someone leaves, what remains? Aliu's story sits right at the heart of that tension, between coming to and leaving Connecticut's Brass Valley. | MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY |



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1. Tony Bennett performed, and actor/director James Naughton was the emcee, at the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation's annual **Fall Gala** in Greenwich in October. From left, JJ Ryan Anthony, Monte Lipman, Angelina Lipman, Avery Lipman, Tony Bennett, Janet Lipman, Kathy Giusti, Paul Giusti, James Naughton and Michael Reinert. (photo by Julien Jarry)



2. Kara Cullen, Kara Venus, Amanda Trothier (back row, from left) and Stephanie Berman (front) pose for a group shot at the photo booth at the Connecticut Humane Society's **Diamonds in the Ruff** dinner and auction in September. (photo by Rachel Olivera of A Corporate Image photography)



3. Nancy Gannon cuddles Teddy, a 2-month-old spaniel mix, at the Connecticut Humane Society's **Diamonds in the Ruff** event. (photo by Rachel Olivera of A Corporate Image photography)

4. Martin D. Schwartz of Trumbull, the retiring president and CEO of The Kennedy Center, was named this year's tribute Honoree at the Kennedy Center's 53rd **Four Seasons Ball** at Rolling Hills Country Club in Wilton. From left, Martin Schwartz with wife Elaine, son Michael and daughter Allyson Mandelbaum. (photo by Stuart Walls/Woodstock Studio)



5. Lina Dureza, right, director of nursing services at Hughes Health & Rehabilitation in West Hartford, received the **2017 Public Service Award** from Stephanie Knutson, president of the Connecticut Nurses Association, at CNA's recent Diamond Jubilee Awards reception. (photo courtesy of Hughes Health & Rehabilitation)



6. More than \$13,000 was raised at a pig roast held at the Storrs home of Rikke Wassenberg by the **Friends of Ecole Agape** (School of Love). The organization supports a primary school serving 200 girls in Lilavois, outside of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. From left: Judy Belek, Marie Michele Darbouze, Ted Hill, Lillie Tierney, and Chantal Coutard. Darbouze and Coutard operate the school in Haiti and traveled to Storrs for the event. (photo by Anthony Machia)



7. Andrea Obston Marketing Communications celebrated 35 years in business with a fundraiser for the **UGLY (Unnecessary Gifts and Luxuries to the Young-at-Heart) Fund** at the home of the Hartford Yard Goats. Back row, from left, Erica West, Katie Kresic, Jordon Walters and Teresa McCann; front, company founder Andrea Obston. (photo by Ron Obston)



8. Chief Strong Horse, 96, of Manchester Manor, was honored with the Manchester Community College's Native American Heritage Leadership Award at the college's **Native American Heritage Month opening ceremony** in November. From left, Lorén Spears, executive director of the Tomaquag Museum in Exeter, Rhode Island; Chief Strong Horse and T.J. Barber, MCC's director of student activities. (photo by Tom Andrea)



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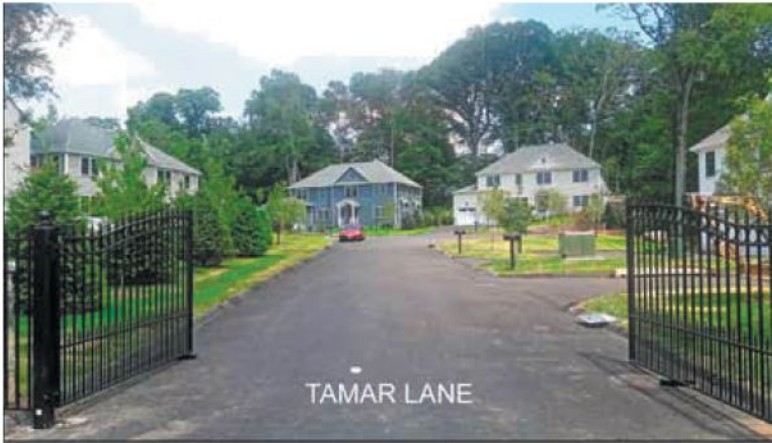


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It's amazing what a small group of dedicated and skilled volunteers can accomplish to showcase their love of model trains.

Walk into the Boothe Memorial Railway Society Museum, part of Stratford's Boothe Park, and be prepared to gape. Or just smile.

When those more than 12 trains are running, you will behold an armada of whistling engines whirling through a carefully crafted landscape of miniature trees, mountains, tunnels, town buildings and rail yards.

"We're just model-train enthusiasts," says Paul DeVitto, president of the Boothe Memorial Railway Society. "It gets under your skin. It can't be cured."

The society formed in 1999 after the family of Arthur Arsenault donated to the

community a 12-by-15-foot model train layout that Arsenault had built. It was stored in a town garage at the park.

When town officials asked for volunteers to build a structure to house the layout, the railway society's members answered the call. In addition to creating that structure, reminiscent of a railroad station, they upgraded Arsenault's project and several new layouts on different scales. In 2002 the museum opened.

The society's brochure states: "Our purpose is to promote an interest in model trains and railroad history through educational projects, community outreach and fellowship among members, thus expanding the growth and enjoyment of the hobby and appreciation of railroad history."

Don Masso, left, vice president of the Boothe Memorial Railway Society, and Paul DeVitto, president of the society, stand next to an O-Gauge Rio Grande steam engine model railroad layout at the society's building at Boothe Park in Stratford. PHOTO: PETER HVIZDAK

Upon entering the museum, immediately to your right is an extraordinary 72-inch-high curved wood trestle that supports the train as it runs over and past a small pond, waterfall and other scenery.

The trestle was the work of Don Masso, the society's vice president. "I cut the lumber in my basement wood shop," he says. "It took me several months to finish the trestle. It was a labor of love."

Masso adds, "I grew up right here in Stratford, not far from the railroad tracks. It stuck in my bones."

One might think the society's approximately 45 members have worked for real railroad companies, but only a couple fit this category. Masso notes, "Paul is in the real estate business. I was in insurance. We have a doctor and several school teachers."

The members pay just \$20 in annual dues. "Everyone is encouraged to join," DeVitto says. "We've got people like Don who are highly sophisticated in electronics (and woodworking) and people who just come in and ask: 'Can I join?' Some of them want to build their own home layouts. We're happy to give them information."

"Everybody does their thing," says Ed Montagnino, another society member. "I do a lot of the electrical stuff but I don't touch the scenery."

Montagnino is also the guy who takes the society's portable layout out into the community. He notes that most residents of senior citizen centers aren't able to come to the museum.

Montagnino adds, "This is also a museum of artifacts from the railroad industry." He points to the railroad signs, flags, uniforms, signaling kits and lights from the New

Haven and New York Central lines. You can also spot paintings of railroads as well as conductor figurines and a ticket booth.

"We want this whole thing to be interactive," DeVitto says, "so that our visitors, especially the little ones, can have fun with it."

DeVitto walks me past a large model of Thomas the Tank Engine and squats down by a model train, led by another Thomas engine carrying cartoon figures from *Sesame Street*.

"It's down at the kids' level," DeVitto says. "They can sit here on the stool and watch it."

But they also like the other layouts. DeVitto says, "The best part is when the little kids come in here, get up on their tiptoes and you see the smiles on their faces. That makes it all worthwhile."

Masso also welcomes the youngsters. "When kids come in and I'm around, I give them a little train whistle. They go tootin' around and have fun."

The floor-level layouts include, in intricate detail, miniature autos, boats, train cars, human figures and town buildings. Outside a bank stands a group of bank robbers. A portion of Bridgeport's Beardsley Zoo is here, including its tiny spinning carousel.

Another railroad runs on a loop near

the ceiling, drawing attention with its bells and whistles. There is also a side room with an additional layout still being created by John Csonka, the society's treasurer. He is working on the expanse of trees and adjoining landscape. Periodically the train disappears when it enters a tunnel and goes behind the mountains.

Although admission to the museum is free, at its entrance is a donation box. A sign attached to it states: "Your donation will help us complete the garden railroad." That rail layout is set up just outside the museum in warm months.

The museum is open most Saturdays during the summer from 1-4 p.m. At other times of the year the open houses are held 1-4 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month, weather permitting. More information is available at bmrailways.com.

In addition, the members hold work sessions on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 7 p.m. to about 8:30. The public can attend.

"That's when we do repairs or clean the tracks," Masso says. "You've got to do it if you want the trains to run."

Randall Beach is the longtime columnist for the New Haven Register, where his column appears Fridays and Sundays.



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|community|

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY



Left: From left, Deirdre Houlihan DiCara, FISH executive director; Steve Caruso, board president; Earl Gibson, case manager; Robin King, program and facility manager; Vera Halilaj, case manager; Margaret Franzi, food pantry director; Jeremy Nelson, shelter monitor; and Al Graboski, a former client.

Right: After falling on hard times, Walter Stuckey is "very happy" go be at the FISH house in Torrington.

PHOTOS: MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

Back to Basics

FISH OF NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT PROVIDES FOOD, SHELTER & SUPPORT TO NORTHWEST CORNER'S NEEDY

Walter Stuckey was being treated for depression at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington when he learned that he'd have to go to a homeless shelter for his next bed. Stuckey had been a plumber for some 40 years. "I had a real good business, then I got sick with no insurance," he says. When they told him about the shelter, his first reaction was one of shock. "Ah, come on. I led a good life, you know?"

The hurt in Stuckey's voice captures some of the elemental parts of the way we think of homeless shelters in general. There is often an impression of them as dark, dank or horrid places, full of chaos. What Stuckey found when he arrived at the FISH house in Torrington, the local name for Friends in Service of Humanity of Northwestern Connecticut, surprised him. The shelter is not a horror. "I'm very happy to be here. ... The staff here is very good. Everybody gets along good," Stuckey says.

When people in Stuckey's situation arrive at the FISH house, they are met with a battery of services, connecting them to health care, employment, housing and mental health resources if they're needed. A doctor's office is on site, as well as an industrial kitchen. Though it is busy, the atmosphere is one of stability.

In 2016, 112 people went through the shelter, and just over 2,000 accessed the food pantry, according to Deirdre Houlihan DiCara, FISH's executive director. "We're here to believe in everybody that enters our doors. Everyone deserves a roof over their head and a good life," DiCara says.

The stability offered by the FISH shelter is crucial. Perhaps as much as the material needs of food, a warm bed and a shower, the atmosphere of support and calmness is vital to the people who rely on FISH's services. For many, the condition of homelessness that brings them to FISH's door is when they are at the bottom. The type of place they land when they hit bottom can shape the way they will recover. And this is the central paradox of FISH and many places like it: the ultimate goal for the organization is its own nonexistence, that the conditions which make homeless shelters and food pantries necessary would cease to be.

One of the most difficult structural challenges faced by the workers and clients at FISH is the lack of public transportation in the Northwest Corner, where buses to Hartford and Waterbury

might only run once a day. This means that for those without cars, employment opportunities or access to services elsewhere can be difficult or impossible to get to.

Occasionally, at Christmastime, Santa Claus appears with toys for children in the shelter. "We want to try to keep our kids as innocent as possible," DiCara says.

Around the end of 2016 into the beginning of 2017, state officials announced an "end" to chronic homelessness in the state. "Every verified, chronically homeless individual in the state of Connecticut has been matched with housing," Gov. Dannel P. Malloy said at the time. When asked about the pronouncement during a lunch at FISH house, several of the workers let out weary laughter, the kind that holds back sadness or anger. "It was very misleading, because it was 'chronic homeless.' There are always new homeless people. So we're full," DiCara says.

Chronic homelessness, says Earl Gibson, one of FISH's care managers, is defined as 365 consecutive days of homelessness, or four episodes in three years that total 365 days, in a place not meant for human habitation. Those bouncing around on couches of friends and family do not count.

A central message that the workers and clients at FISH make great effort to get across is that many of us are only one or two paychecks and an unforeseen medical bill away from homelessness. Put another way, the homeless are not too far away from us. "It could be me. I struggle every paycheck, too, and I've got a full-time job," says Margaret Franzi, the director of the food pantry.

Robin King, who does program and facility management at FISH, points to the constant increase in property taxes that are driving people from their homes. King has worked at FISH for 22 years, and says that things are much worse than when she started.

As always, the easiest way to help FISH is to cut a check. Apart from that, towels, bedding and blankets are among the most-needed items this winter. FISH is also looking for someone to donate a space where the organization can take in furniture donations.

fishnwct.org

If you have an organization with an event that you'd like us to consider for the Community page, please send the details to mmurphy@connecticutmag.com.



Discover



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PHOTO: STEVE MCNICHOLAS

STOMPING GROUND

The show **Stomp** is one of the biggest theatrical hits of all time. For more than 25 years, audiences have lined up to watch performers create absolute magic out of the most everyday of objects. Born of the alternative-theater scene in Britain in the 1980s, Stomp is now coming to The Bushnell in Hartford Jan. 12-14.

STOMP

JAN. 12-14 | THE BUSHNELL, HARTFORD

Tickets: \$22.50-\$103.50

bushnell.org

| this month | the short list

► KEEP YOUR COOL

Kool and the Gang are still doin' it, still touring after 50 years. For a dose of the old school, get over to the Palace Theater in Waterbury on Jan. 13 for some grooves that are just a bit harder to find these days. Tickets are \$55-\$96.50. palacetheaterct.org



MATTHEW BROWN/HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA



◀ GAFF OUT LOUD

Jim Gaffigan is a sort of savant of the Midwest, with a dry and wry humor that is a world apart from the rapid-fire punch of some of the East Coast comedians we are used to. Gaffigan comes to Foxwoods Resort Casino on Jan. 27. Tickets are \$34-\$64. foxwoods.com

ERIC LEVIN

DERBY DAY

The Hartford Area Roller Derby is hosting its fifth annual **Roller Polar Run and Pub Crawl** on Jan. 20 in downtown Middletown. Bring items for donation for domestic violence shelters across the state. The event is free, but you have to bring something to donate. The wackiest costume will win a season pass to the Hartford Area Roller Derby. The fun starts at 11:30 a.m. hartfordarearollerderby.com

PIES AND ALE

The expansion of the local craft beer industry has been nothing short of astounding. (Check out staff writer Erik Ofgang's *Craft Cruising* column to keep up to date on the latest on the craft world on page 90.) On Jan. 28, Brewport in Bridgeport plays host to the 18th annual **Connecticut Real Ale Festival**, dubbed the state's premier cask ale event. Tickets are \$45-\$60 (including two slices of Brewport's pizza). brewportct.com

▼ INK WELL

Tattooing has been around for millennia, but for some reason is only now finding some level of acceptance and respect among the professional classes. **Old-School Ink: New Haven Tattoos** is an exhibition on show through March, showcasing the work of New Haven tattoo artists and those who have been inked in the Elm City. Admission to the museum is \$4 for adults. newhavenmuseum.org



PHOTO: COREY HUDSON

See January 2018 calendar listings at
connecticutmag.com/calendar



Isn't It Time For a Different Approach?

Correcting the Cause

One Doctor's Journey A Conversation With Edward C. Corsello

Natural Awakenings recently discussed with Edward C. Corsello, DC, B CAO, a Stratford-based chiropractor, what led him to study the Atlas Orthogonal (AO) technique and advanced therapies to reshape the spine and heal spinal decay. Discovery of these techniques changed the course of his own life.

You were a chiropractor for over 12 years when something happened to you that changed you. Tell us your story.

I've suffered with ulcerative colitis since chiropractic school and was in and out of hospitals. I had tried both medical and alternative "cures" for my condition. I spent thousands of dollars "managing" my symptoms with not only medication but also vitamins, nutrition, acupuncture and traditional chiropractic. You name it, I tried it. I was at the point of hopelessness, ready to accept my doctors' explanation that my disease was "autoimmune", my body was "attacking itself", and it was just a case of "bad genes".

How did you find your way out?

A colleague convinced me to try a chiropractic specialist in the Midwest. When I arrived, he put aside my voluminous medical file and asked me about my spine. I responded that I had no spinal pain, because at the time I thought that spinal "health" was all about "pain". "I mean what is the condition of your spine?" he then said. I admitted that I didn't know as I hadn't had an X-ray in years. My last X-ray was when I was in a car accident and had pain. I didn't understand so I asked him what my spine has to do with my colitis. He answered, "Everything."



How does the health of your spine directly correlate to your overall health?

The brain has within it everything the body needs to be healthy; it speaks to the body through the spine. When the spine moves out of position, it causes blockages that prevent the brain from communicating to each cell, organ, tissue and system within the body. Where

the spine is being choked off, that part of the body will break down. In order for your body to express health, your spine must be healthy. By healing the spine, the nerves can flow at 100 percent, and restoration of health takes place.

What did the chiropractic specialist focus on?

He did a series of tests, including advanced bio-structural X-rays of my spine. He showed me that I had moderate to severe spinal decay in my neck and lower back that was blocking the nerves that run to my colon. By correcting my atlas—the first bone in my neck—through a technique called atlas orthogonal (AO) and repairing my neck and lower spine with advanced therapies, I became symptom free.

How has that experience changed your practice?

I was so impressed with the "miracles" I saw in his office that I decided to expand my practice to offer both AO and advanced therapies to heal the spine. Today, I am one of only two spinal correction specialists and only three AO doctors in the state of Connecticut; people from as far away as New York, Rhode Island, and Delaware come to see me.

I use these powerful techniques that changed my life to treat others who are suf-

fering from asthma and allergies, headaches, neck and back pain—often resulting from car accidents or athletic injuries—and sciatica. They also help with autism, scoliosis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, trigeminal neuralgia, fibromyalgia and ADHD as well as with digestive diseases like Crohn's disease and colitis. Doing the AO correction in conjunction with advanced therapies to heal the spine, we are able to provide permanent relief to some of the most severe and chronic conditions.

Please share some of the feedback you have received.

A patient of mine for over two years who suffers from Parkinson's stated that the chiropractic treatments and maintaining a healthy lifestyle have helped her get off 11 medications. Another told me that she was diagnosed with narcolepsy with cataplexy in 2009. She said she has been off medication since two months into treatment with us and has no symptoms of narcolepsy with cataplexy any longer. There are many other stories.

So what do you actually do?

I don't heal anyone of anything. I perform specific, gentle techniques to remove nerve pressure, and the body responds by healing itself. We get tremendous results. It's as simple as that! Many people find they actually save money on their health care expenses by seeing me. An entire week of care in my office costs what you could pay for one visit elsewhere.

What about diet and supplements?

Of course, healthy nutrition is important. However, "life flow"—from the brain to the organs—must work in conjunction with lifestyle. Think of an automobile. If its structure is compromised, you can put the best fuel in it, but it will not run properly. The same is true of the body. Even the best food and vitamins will have only a limited benefit to a body that is breaking down due to a decaying spine.

Edward Corsello, DC, B CAO, is a board-certified Atlas Orthogonist with an office in Stratford. Connect at CorselloClinic.com and 203-381-1800. Mention this article for a complimentary consultation.

this month | front row

It's been a tough year for comedy. The world gets harder to parody, as what we thought was impossible is actually played out across our screens. Where do comics fit in? One possibility is a resurgence of the cynical and bitter style of previous days. One of the best in that game is New Yorker **Colin Quinn**, the former *Saturday Night Live* "Weekend Update" anchor who comes to the Ridgefield Playhouse on Jan. 11.

Have you performed at the Ridgefield Playhouse before?

Yeah, of course. All the comedians love it for some reason. We all love that gig. I think it's because it's an old but elegant-looking theater, you know what I mean? You feel like you're in show business, you know?

This is your first stand-up tour in seven years, and you've been on Broadway in the intervening time. Was the theater world a big adjustment from the world of pure stand-up?

I mean it's great because I feel like the Ridgefield Playhouse is a hybrid place, too, where you can do a little bit of both. That's why I love it so much, it combines them both. [In theater] you're still performing by yourself in front of a crowd and still judging it by the laughing. It's just better because people aren't drinking and yelling and ordering, you know what I mean? You can control your thoughts better, you know?

What's the basic idea behind the current show, *One in Every Crowd*? On Twitter, the tour poster has you photoshopped into a picture at the Last Supper, in the Mets dugout.

Judas Iscariot is a good example of "the one in every crowd." Because there's one person in every crowd of 12 or 14 people that's gonna ruin things. You know? Like in every office, in every place you've ever worked, in every public situation, there's one person that makes everyone feel bad.

So this is a macabre take on social dynamics?

Yes, exactly. It's basically how that affects us, not only throughout our lives, but affects every system. It's why no system ever works: democracy or any system, socialism, capitalism. No system works because of that person.

It's a bit of a bleak outlook. I guess we all have one of those these days.

Oh yeah, exactly. Now's a good time for anybody who's really cynical and sarcastic.

You must be excited to get back to the stand-up world.

Yeah, it's been really fun. Because instead of doing a [theater] show where you kind of have to keep things in a certain order, I can play around and just have fun and just see where I'm going. Like I'm talking about one in every crowd, but then I'm talking about politics and



COLIN QUINN

JAN. 11 | 8 P.M.

THE RIDGEFIELD PLAYHOUSE

Tickets: \$45

203-438-5795, ridgefieldplayhouse.org

whatever's happening topically where you don't have to follow a traditional line. I don't have to keep it structured, lineal, thematic, you know?

What do you make of the state of politics?

The state of Trump? I think the whole country's shocked. Even the people that like him are shocked that he's lasted this long. It's been a year, which is amazing. I just read one of his tweets this morning, and it's literally like a 10-year-old kid tweeting. I'm waiting for him after each tweet to go, "This was a bit." You know. "I was just joking. Nobody talks like this." But he never does. It's interesting on a lot of levels. One of the reasons he got elected was people are sick of being lectured, like half this country is sick of being lectured about their flaws. My show is also about opinion and how when you squelch people's opinions, it'll come out in hostile form by electing a guy like that. He's almost a grenade that people throw. Even if they blow their hand off they don't care. So it's kind of a weird time. But to our country's credit, nobody is discussing anything below the most surface parts of these things.

Are you hoping to drill down a bit deeper then?

I would like to, yeah. But it's hard with comedy, because you want to make sure it's funny first. Nobody wants to be lectured by a comedian. You're supposed to make them laugh. I have to make sure that whatever I'm saying has to get laughs, otherwise it's not comedy. I'm not advertising myself as a philosopher.

Anything else that people should know about your show at Ridgefield, and the March 10 show at Infinity Music Hall & Bistro in Hartford?

Just that I know the truth about Connecticut, which is: people always act like it's this WASP-y state. It's got seven of the most dangerous cities in the history of the United States [laughs]. I love when people go "Oh, Connecticut!" They always act like it's Connecticut from 1955. It's not Katharine Hepburn anymore. | MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY |

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One of Fairfield County's oldest clubs becomes its newest.

After 104 years, Ox Ridge Hunt Club is changing its name to the Ox Ridge Riding & Racquet Club. In addition to the new Equestrian complex (stables, outdoor and indoor riding rings) and its world-class Trainers, a new 18,000 sq.ft. Clubhouse will feature a Fitness Center and Squash Courts. With 6 singles and 2 doubles courts, Ox Ridge will rank among the top squash facilities in the region.

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For membership information contact: info@oxridge.com, call 203.655.2559 or visit oxridge.com

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Slip and Slide

EMBRACE THE CHILL AND HEAD TO THESE SLEDDING HILLS AND OUTDOOR RINKS

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY



Sledding down Middletown's Foss Hill
PHOTO: CATHERINE AVALONE

There are two ways to respond to the cold and the snow of winter. One way is to hide inside with a book and a blanket. Another way is to get outside and embrace it. Of course, pretty much every town in New England has its own personal sledding hill, known to all who live there. Same goes for frozen ponds on which to play hockey or go skating. Here's our list of sledding spots to bring the kids to on a snow day, and public outdoor rinks to do some skating when there's no fresh snowfall.

SLEDDING

FOSS HILL, Middletown

Located on the Wesleyan campus, Foss Hill usually fills up with students and locals alike after a good snowfall. Sledders get the added bonus of being surrounded by the gorgeous old buildings of the university. Stop into the nearby Neon Deli at the corner of Vine and Cross streets for a cup of coffee to warm yourself up.

EDGEHILL PARK, New Haven

There is a certain grandeur to this park that straddles the Hamden-New Haven border. It is situated on the grounds of the Eli Whitney estate, and you can sled where the legendary industrialist once walked his grounds.

ELIZABETH PARK, Hartford

Another of the grandiose, stately city parks in the state, Elizabeth Park in the summer months is known for its Rose Garden, but in the winter time there are some great hills for sledding. Check out the one on the Hartford side near the corner of Asylum and Prospect.

ICE SKATING

SIMSBURY FARMS, Simsbury

The rink at Simsbury Farms costs \$6 for non-residents (\$5 for kids and seniors), and is open to the public Saturdays from 2:15-4:15 p.m. and 7:30-9, and Sundays from 2:15-4:15. There is a canopy over the rink, protecting skaters from the elements. Check the Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation department website for more details.
simsburyrec.com

HARBOR PARK, Middletown

At some point in January, Middletown will open up an ice skating rink in Harbor Park, overlooking the Connecticut River. City officials are hoping to throw open the doors sometime around the Martin Luther King weekend, so check

the website for details. The city has been trying to figure out for years how to get people down to the beautiful riverfront, and this might be just the ticket. The free-to-the-public rink will be open on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, and will likely run through March.

cityofmiddletown.com/recreation

LONGSHORE RINK, Westport

This rink is maintained by the Westport Police Athletic League and is open for public skate several times throughout the week. Unlike many other public outdoor rinks, this one has proper boards and stick time. A bonus are views of Long Island Sound and beautiful sunsets. Check the website for pricing and hours.

wpalrink.com

An advertisement for Aqua Pool & Patio Inc. featuring a large, ornate swimming pool with a waterfall and surrounding landscaping. The text "Behind Every Great Home" is prominently displayed at the top. The company logo, which includes a stylized water drop and the text "Aqua Pool & Patio Inc. SINCE 1970", is in the bottom center. Below the logo is the phone number "(800) 722-AQUA (2782)". To the right of the logo is the website "www.aquapool.com". At the very bottom, there is a small line of text: "HIC 0503482 • SPB 0000044".

Story Time

HARTFORD'S *SPEAK UP* SERIES
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BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

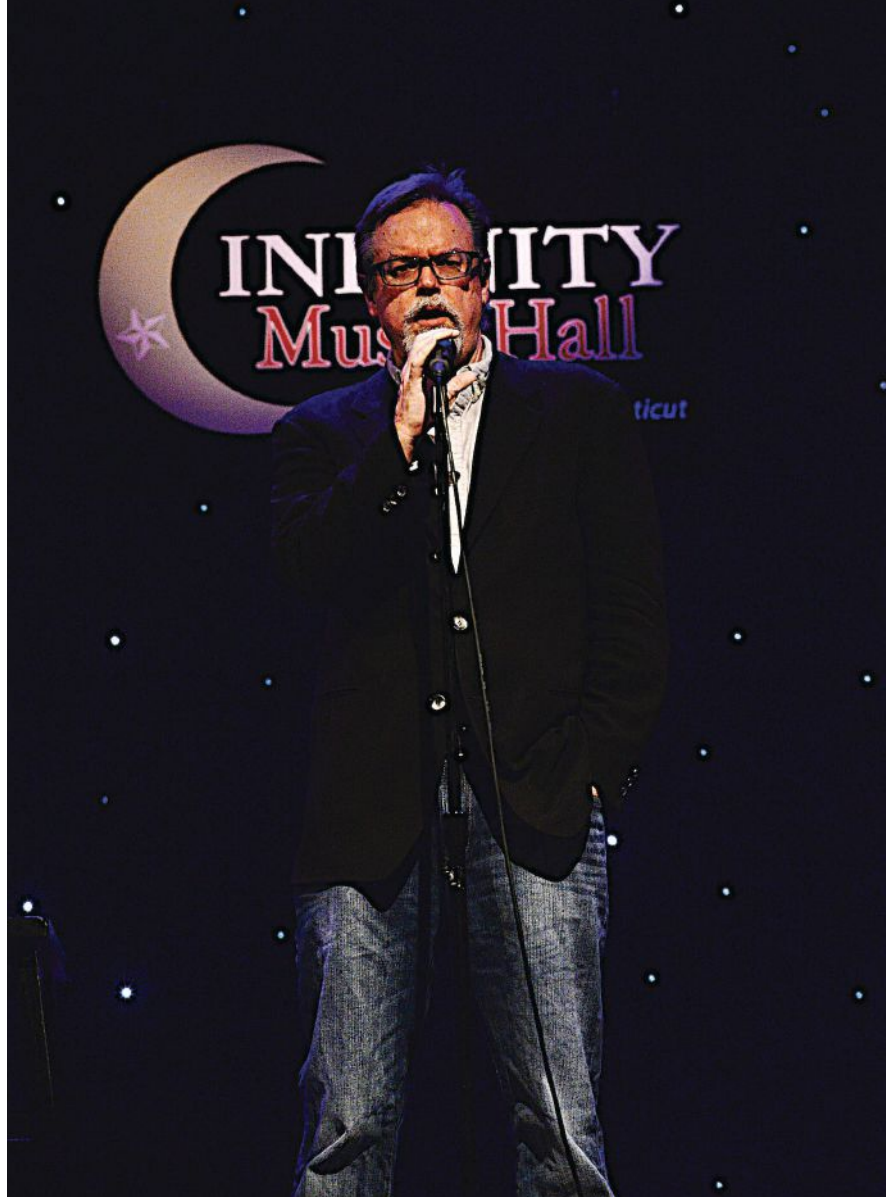
Before television, before radio, before the internet, before most visual art, before the Gutenberg press, there was storytelling. While it never went away, there has been something of a renaissance in recent years, as the podcast form and the intimacy of storytelling has awakened something deep within us. Hartford's homegrown storytelling series *Speak Up* is the brainchild of Matt Dicks, a fifth-grade schoolteacher and a regular on *The Moth*, the popular storytelling radio show. We spoke to Dicks about the upcoming *Speak Up* storytelling show at Hartford's Infinity Music Hall on Jan. 27.

What is *Speak Up*?

What we do is personal storytelling: true stories, told on stage, without notes. We pick a theme for each one of our shows [the Jan. 27 theme is "Unfinished Business"], so all the stories are gonna be loosely fitting that theme in some way. My wife [Elysha Dicks] is the host of the show, and I always tell a story. I'm joined by six other storytellers. Some are local people, some are people I pluck out of workshops that I teach, and some are people from our audiences that have gotten up the courage to take the stage. Then I bring in professionals from New York and Boston and those scenes, as well, who come in and perform for us. We like to have a collection of experienced storytellers, people who have been doing it for a while, and also some people who have never done it before. They tell true stories about their lives. Some of them are hilarious, and some of them are heartbreaking. When we cast our show, we take pitches from the audience members and the community in addition to the people we choose on our own. What we're looking for is a blend of stories.

How long have you been doing the series?

Since May 2013. I've been telling stories for *The Moth* and other organizations since 2011. In the beginning of 2013 I looked up at my wife one day and said, "You know, we should do something here in Hartford so I don't have to



PHOTOS COURTESY OF INFINITY HALL

Known for spinning a good yarn, WNPR personality Colin McEnroe performs at a *Speak Up* event at Infinity Music Hall. **Below:** Matt Dicks, the originator of the *Speak Up* storytelling show.

drive around all the time." And she said, "Sure. Go do something." So we didn't expect it to really become anything. I went to Real Art Ways and met with [Executive Director] Will Wilkins and I said, "I'd like to do storytelling here in Hartford." We really didn't have anything here at the time. He said, "Sure, this can be your space." He gave us a date and said bring in an audience. It was a free show, our first one. We honestly expected this to be once or twice a year; we'd have 40 of our friends, sit in a circle and tell a story. Our first show we had 150 people come; it was standing room only. So we knew we had something. We now produce about 15 shows a year. In addition to that, now teaching has become a big part of the process. We just finished a series with an organization called Voices of Hope, where we worked with the children of Holocaust survivors, teaching them how to tell their stories.

What makes a good story?

A story has to reflect change in a human being over time. You have to be something different at the end of your story. It doesn't mean you have to be a better version of yourself — you can be

a worse version of yourself. The word we use is "romp," which is a story where nothing really changes: "something crazy happened to me, let me tell you the crazy thing." And at the end of it if I say, "Wow, well, how did that change your perspective on the world or how you look at yourself?" and you say, "Well it didn't, it's just crazy, isn't it?" That's not the kind of story I want to put on a stage, 'cause it doesn't move people, it doesn't connect you to them deeply or in an emotional way. There has to be something at stake in a story. It can't be just get on stage and tell us about your mother. There has to be something at risk.

SPEAK UP: UNFINISHED BUSINESS

JAN. 27 | 8 P.M.

INFINITY MUSIC HALL & BISTRO

Hartford

Tickets: \$19-\$44

facebook.com/speakupstory





The Bard as Bowie



PHOTO: JEREMY DANIEL

Think of **Adam Pascal**, and thoughts spring to mind of the romantic roles he's played in such musicals as *Rent* or *Aida* or his more dramatic turns in *Cabaret* and *Memphis* or his sensitive rock persona as a solo rock artist.

But in a bust-a-gut comedy?

In the touring Broadway musical *Something Rotten* — which plays at The Bushnell in Hartford Jan. 30-Feb. 4, Pascal plays an egocentric, codpiece-strutting William Shakespeare as if he were a rock superstar of London, circa 1490.

Is he channeling any one of his own rock heroes for this wild and crazy interpretation?

"Freddie Mercury, definitely," Pascal tells me on the phone from his home in Los Angeles where the tour had landed for the holiday season. "And David Lee Roth and David Bowie, too; those peacocky, flamboyant front men whom I wanted to be like when I was growing up and wanting to be a rock star myself.

"And, ironically, when I started actually playing [in a rock band], I wasn't like them at all. It wasn't in my personality. So now I get to pretend and work through these fantasies I've had since childhood by playing this character in that way."

Comedy is an untapped area of his career, which has been going on for 21 years since he made his theater bow with *Rent* and became the face for a new generation of leading men.

"I love to laugh," says Pascal, now 47 and the father of two teenage sons. "And I love to make people laugh. People who know me know me as a comedian at heart, so this is my opportunity to express that. Having done so many dramatic roles in my career, right now I'm really having fun doing comedy and I would like to continue to do it for as long as I can."

bushnell.org



Theater collective Rude Mechs believes in the power of the team. PHOTO: RINO PIZZI

▲ HOW RUDE!

It's hard to describe the theater collective **Rude Mechs** and its collaborative work on stage.

Yale's Binger Center for New Theatre commissioned the Austin-based group to create a new piece several years back and the result is *Field Guide*, which will receive its world premiere Jan. 26-Feb. 17 at New Haven's Yale Repertory Theatre.

It's a free-wheeling take on Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Coincidentally one of the Rep's earliest hits was *The Idiots Karamazov* in 1974 by **Christopher Durang** and **Albert Innaurato**, starring then-student Meryl Streep.

"We found out about that after we started working on it," says **Shawn Sides**, one of the five artistic directors of the theater collaborative.

They started by exploring the idea of "how to be a good person" but soon realized they needed a narrative to hold the piece together. That's when they turned to the Russian novel — "which is famously about how to be a good person" — and even fooled around with the 1958 Hollywood film.

Soon the collaborative's theater piece became a thing unto itself.

"We all put in ideas for moments and scenes and monologues and text and choreography on note cards in a collage-way," says Sides, who also directs the show. "No good art is made without a big stack of notecards. Staples should be a sponsor!"

Sides says they foolishly thought they could arrive at an answer to their initial question. "The search is still there but — spoiler alert — we *don't* have the answer on how to be a good person. But hmmm, wait. Maybe we should make the audience *think* we do have the answer so they'll hang around for an hour and a half."

yalrep.org

▶ A ROMANTIC RETURN

Last time **M. Scott McLean** was cast at Hartford's TheaterWorks it was in the two-hander romance *Midsummer* a few years back. McLean returns to the theater in another two-character romance, Nick Payne's *Constellations*, which plays Jan. 19-Feb. 18.

Is there something about him and romance?

"I feel I just lucked out," says the very modest McLean from Utah, where he was in rehearsal for another play. "I wouldn't be arrogant enough to claim myself as that go-to guy."

OK, then let's talk about alternative



M. Scott McLean

universes, which is central to the play about the what-ifs of a romantic relationship.

"There's a part of me that thinks that's a really wonderful, beautiful idea, that every eventual outcome is happening on some plane and the one we are conscious of is the one we need the most," he says. "I think there is something romantic about that."

Is there a what-if in his life?

"Lots of those — though I try not to spend too much time thinking on it. But this play brings up all

these questions about life and love and the people we want to be."

theaterworkshartford.org

DID YOU KNOW...

... that the Broadway musical hit *The Band's Visit* had its start at Hartford Stage in 2010 when it was part of its play reading series there?

... that the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical *Carousel*, which is having a high-profile Broadway revival with previews beginning Feb. 28, had its world premiere at New Haven's Shubert Theatre in 1945?

DRAGON GIRL

Remember the film *Night at the Museum*, about the secret life after hours at New York's Museum of Natural History? Well, imagine *Night at the Library* and think not of one single evening but an entire childhood of running free among the stacks. That's the youth of actor **Sharon Washington**, who literally grew up in a branch of the New York Public Library. Her father was a custodian and her family lived in an apartment on the top floor. Her nighttime playground was the world of books.

That experience is the basis for her solo show, *Feeding the Dragon*, which plays Hartford Stage Jan. 11-Feb 4 before it moves off-Broadway. (It had its world premiere last fall at Pittsburgh's City Theatre.)

Was it as fantastic as one might imagine? "Oh, yes," she tells me on the phone from her home in New York. "I was the little girl who lived in the library and who had all these magical adventures. Those night-in-the-museum fantasies were my reality and it fueled my imagination."

"It was my first playground," says Washington, an only child. "I'd go into the reference section, run down the spiral

staircase, go into the librarian's work room and play with the old library stamps."

But it's a more complicated story than just a tale of a fantastical youth.

Washington, who is a grad of the Yale School of Drama from the late '80s, says the piece is also about the flip side of the fairy tale, "about a slice of New York life that is gone, of a kind of working-class family that I think is missing now. It's about a certain

part of our hard-working urban life with a particular stratum of society."

The title comes from her father needing to continually feed the coal furnace in the library's basement. So how does she keep her "dragon" fired?

"I've been fortunate to work in so many new plays and work with such great collaborators," she says. "That keeps my fire going." hartfordstage.com



If she hadn't been bitten by the acting bug, Sharon Washington might have been a librarian. PHOTO: KRISTI JAN HOOVER

Frank Rizzo has covered the arts-entertainment scene in Connecticut since disco reigned in the '70s, including nearly 34 years writing for the Hartford Courant. Email him at FrRiz@aol.com. Follow him on Twitter @ShowRiz.

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Beer Minimum

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GREG MOODY

A man walked into a liquor store on a vintage October day and reached for a case of the seasonally appropriate Oktoberfest Samuel Adams beer.

It could have been almost anywhere in the U.S., but what happened next probably could have happened only in Connecticut. The man, Kieran Curtis of Windsor, wasn't the usual buy-by-the-case kind of guy. He brings home a case maybe once a year, as in Oktoberfest. That's what brought him to Total Wine & More in Manchester to stock up.

"I thought it was a good idea," he says. "It's only available for a few weeks every fall."

Now that we've established Curtis as an infrequent case buyer, he can be forgiven for his unfamiliarity with the peculiarities of Connecticut liquor and beer pricing. What makes Connecticut and so many other states regulate the sale of alcohol with the subtlety of a weekend UConn kegger?

Curtis did not anticipate that when he plunked the 24-beer case — with a scanning code on its exterior — on the checkout counter that the clerk would ignore the SKU, open the case, and scan one of the four individual six-packs inside.

"Only then did it occur to me that I'd been charged the full price of four six-packs (\$37.96 total)," says Curtis, "providing no savings for buying the case. This is wrong, because a six-pack of Oktoberfest was selling for \$9.49 and 12-packs were selling for \$13.99. How can a case of 24 sell for \$10 more than two 12-packs?"

Because, Mr. Curtis, you live in Connecticut, where beer and liquor are priced like no other state in the nation. Store management told Curtis, and Total Wine & More later confirmed to The CONNsumer, that Curtis was charged the higher price because the case contained four individual six-packs. If the case contained 24 individual bottles, watch out: Curtis would have been charged an even higher, per-bottle rate.

"A common misconception for consumers: A 24-pack is cheaper than a 12-pack because they're 'buying in bulk,'"

says Lora Rae Anderson, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Consumer Protection, whose Liquor Control Commission oversees state liquor sales. "Not always true."

In Connecticut, wholesalers set minimum prices for bottles of liquor, and six-packs, 12-packs and cases of beer. A retailer then adds shipping and delivery costs, establishing a per-bottle cost. They cannot sell any beer or liquor below this price. Each month, though, a retailer can apply to the state for a discount on a specific item. (In October, Waterford Wine & Spirits was selling Sam Adams Oktoberfest for \$12.15 per 12-pack. View the monthly beer discounts at biznet.ct.gov/dcpopenaccess/liquorcontrol)

No other state works this way. Total Wine & More, a Maryland superstore new to the state, challenged Connecticut's minimum-pricing concept in 2016 with reduced prices that undercut other retailers. It sued, eventually agreeing to obey minimum pricing and pay the state \$37,500 to settle the case.

Minimum pricing is the mom-and-pop liquor store's iron lung. Many would die without it. For anyone who misses mom-and-pop drug stores driven out by CVS and Walgreens or old-fashioned, family-owned stores (goodbye, dear Benny's) extinguished by Walmart, the neighborhood package store has its charms.

It also has higher liquor prices than neighboring states, though a survey last summer determined Connecticut's beer prices are among the nation's lowest.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy for years has tried to overturn the state pricing law, which, he says, would increase state tax revenue by \$5 million. Malloy, with his advanced degree in incredulity, makes a convincing argument:

"If we had a law that forced stores to sell bread for a price that was determined by state government," he said, "people would be screaming about capitalism and big government. But for some reason, we allow this anti-free market mandate to continue for one particular industry — and we are, in fact, the only state in the nation that

operates in this manner."

But not the only state with peculiar liquor laws. Drown your legislative sorrows in this wacky six-pack from around the country:

Pennsylvania: Wine and liquor is available only at state-run stores. Beer is not available at those state stores or grocery stores, only beer distributors or beer-only stores. Until 2015, those stores sold only cases or kegs. (They can now sell 12-packs, too.) Want a six-pack? Go to a bar and ask for one, to go.

Louisiana: It's legal for a parent to buy alcoholic beverages for their underage children. Also: Drive-through daiquiri stands are legal, but you can be arrested for driving with an open container if you put a straw in the cup.

New York: All liquor stores must be owned by a single owner who lives within a specified distance of the store. (Maybe not so wacky. It could keep away the superstores.)

Wisconsin: Minors can consume alcohol if supervised by a parent or guardian.

Oklahoma: Anything with 4 percent alcohol by volume or higher can be sold only at room temperature.

Iowa: Residents are restricted to bringing only one liter of an alcoholic beverage from another state, but four liters from another country. Violators face a misdemeanor charge with up to one year in jail and a fine up to \$1,875.

And in Utah, restaurants could mix drinks until last March only behind a 7-foot partition known in the Mormon state as the "Zion Curtain." The wall requirement was repealed but restaurants still need approval before tearing down their partition.

Feeling any better, Connecticut?

Curtis returned the case for a refund, but by then the Oktoberfest season had ended.

"Bugger," he says. "But I returned it anyway out of principle."

Next year he'll know how state retailers observe Oktoberfest and every other beer-worthy occasion: uniquely Connecticut.

Send your consumer complaints, concerns and tips to CONNsumer@connecticutmag.com.

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waves to treat Alzheimer's?

BY ERIK OFGANG

A CONNECTICUT INVENTOR HAS LICENSED ELECTROMAGNETIC-FIELD TECHNOLOGY TO A PHOENIX COMPANY THAT HAS STARTED AN FDA-APPROVED TRIAL ON HUMANS. SIMILAR TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN USED ON MICE TO STOP AND REVERSE PROGRESSION OF THE DISEASE. WILL IT WORK IN HUMANS?

For about as far back as he can remember, Eric Knight has been solving problems with inventions.

As a youth he wanted to be an outfielder on the baseball

team but didn't have enough arm strength to throw balls back to the infield. He built himself a lead baseball that was far heavier than a real baseball and practiced with it.

As an adult he was a marathon runner but couldn't find time to train, so he developed the Para-Shirt, a training shirt that creates wind resistance as it billows out behind a runner. In the late 1990s that invention landed him a guest spot on the *Late Show with David Letterman*.

The president and founder of Unionville-based Remarkable Technologies Inc., Knight has also helped send private rockets to space, written about the process in his book *The New Race to Space*, and developed a communication tool for scuba divers called the Acou-Stik.

In 2010 Knight came across an article about research led by Dr. Gary Arendash, who was then at the University of South Florida. Studying mice that were genetically modified to develop Alzheimer's disease, Arendash found that high-frequency electromagnetic-field exposure could prevent and reverse their symptoms.

This was observed by mice performing cognitive tasks more effectively, such as finding their way through a maze, and by analysis of biological markers of Alzheimer's in the mice including decreased buildup of amyloid-beta in their brains.

■ ■ ■

A Ph.D. and leading authority on Alzheimer's, Arendash has published more than 100 peer-reviewed articles in major journals including *Science*, *Nature* and the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, for



Dr. Gary Arendash adjusts the device on a volunteer during a demonstration. HARRIET JONES/WNPR

which he held the position of senior editor. He started studying the effects of electromagnetic fields on mice with Alzheimer's around 2008.

"I got interested in the electromagnetic field, actually with the opposite hypothesis that they might be dangerous," Arendash says. "Because at that time there was some association studies saying that cellphones, which emit electromagnetic waves, could increase your chances of brain tumors. We thought that maybe exposing our transgenic Alzheimer's mice to electromagnetic fields would actually exacerbate the onset of Alzheimer's in these mice."

Instead it helped the mice.

"We saw very nice memory improvement and actually an alleviation of their brain pathology," Arendash says.

He and his team confirmed these findings through follow-up research. In 2010 he published results from his findings in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*. The work received national press and that's when Knight first became aware of it. In 2013, Arendash formed NeuroEM Therapeutics Inc. to clinically advance electromagnetic technology

against Alzheimer's. Last year the company developed an initial head device (the MemorEM 1000) for use in humans.

The antennas being used to generate the electromagnetic fields on mice in the experiment reminded Knight of work he had done on rockets. Knight was part of the Civilian Space eXploration Team led by Ky Michaelson, which became the first civilian rocket group to have a verified space launch in 2004, when it sent a rocket to an altitude of 72 miles. Knight headed up avionics for the mission and had developed the antennas for this and other rockets the group launched.

The rockets used "these flat antennas that would wrap around the airframe of a rocket," Knight says. The rocket happened to be about 10 inches in diameter, and as Knight researched Arendash's work he says a spark went off. He thought, "if we can

scale this thing that's being done with mice up to humans, a human head is about the

same in diameter as a rocket. What if I take these antennas and flip them around and use that to broadcast some type of medical therapy."

Knight designed a helmet-like prototype of the device, applied for a patent and was awarded one in 2015.

■ ■ ■

Meanwhile, Arendash's research continued to progress into Transcranial Electromagnetic Treatment (TEMT). Since the initial study, he has done multiple

follow-ups building on that work that have had similar results. Arendash says virtually all mice treated show cognitive improvement and, at least in mice, the studies "clearly show this technology can have profound effects on the Alzheimer's disease process."

More than 5.4 million people suffer from Alzheimer's in the U.S., according to



Inventor Eric Knight

estimates. Despite much effort from those in the medical community, no effective drugs have been developed to slow the progression of the disease. “The current drugs that have been available only mask the cognitive decline,” Arendash says.

He believes these drugs are ineffective because they are neither designed nor able to target the root cause of the disease.

“Up to the last few years, most Alzheimer’s researchers believed that the two main causes of Alzheimer’s were the big neuritic plaques that formed outside of brain cells and neurofibrillary tangles that formed inside brain cells,” Arendash says. “Now it appears that that is not the case, but rather it is small aggregates, called ‘oligomers,’ of toxic proteins that form inside brain cells that are responsible for Alzheimer’s pathogenesis.”

One of these proteins is called beta-amyloid, which aggregates inside brain cells. Arendash and others now believe these small aggregates of bad protein are the cause of the disease. If correct, this means to treat the disease you need to get inside the neurons. Arendash and other researchers have found TEMT gets inside the brain cells and de-aggregates bad protein.

“Electromagnetic waves have no problem getting into the brain, and then getting into the brain’s neurons,” Arendash says. “By contrast, drugs have a very difficult time getting into the brain and even more difficulty getting into the brain’s cells or neurons. We’re able to project our technology directly where it needs to be to be therapeutic against this disease and that’s inside the brain cells themselves. That, I believe, is why we’ve had some 15 years of failure within the Alzheimer’s research area and why we haven’t come up with an effective treatment. In my opinion, it’s not that we’re starting treatment too late, as many people now believe, so they are focusing on prevention, it’s that flawed drugs have been used. Drugs that can’t get into the brain, drugs that don’t address the disease process properly. That’s where we think we have a real advantage with this technology because electromagnetic waves get into the brain, and into the neurons.”

In addition, TEMT provides mitochondrial enhancement, which increases energy production in neurons and increases neuronal activity in brain regions impacted by Alzheimer’s.

■ ■ ■

Arendash’s team and the University of South Florida submitted an initial patent application in 2009, with its major claim being that electromagnetic waves can protect against and treat Alzheimer’s disease; the resulting issued patent is NeuroEM’s flagship patent for this technology. The company also submitted



Test subjects are currently using the MemorEM 1000 device in a Phase 1 clinical trial. HARRIET JONES/WNPR

a follow-up patent application in 2014 describing a head device that can be used for treating humans with electromagnetic waves. Although Arendash’s application had an earlier priority date, Knight’s application went through the patent process quickly and was awarded. Arendash was surprised, but he and Knight quickly developed a great working relationship. “Eric is a terrific inventor, with a keen ability to see future technology that could help humans,” Arendash says.

Knight told him, “I’m not here to be a competitor, I’m here because I want to help.” Knight adds, “we became fast friends.”

In Connecticut, Knight helped raise funding for Arendash’s company. He lobbied for the Connecticut Angel Investor Forum, which he is a member of, to invest. Ultimately the forum put in about \$150,000 and the company has raised a little more than \$1 million, much of it from Connecticut stakeholders.

A Phase 1 clinical trial is underway at the Byrd Alzheimer’s Institute in Florida that is looking at 12 subjects with mild or moderate Alzheimer’s. Participants were recruited between October and December. For the trial, each participant will engage, or has already engaged, in a two-month regime of TEMT with the NeuroEM’s head device, called the MemorEM 1000. (Participants were recruited on a rolling basis; those who started in October have finished their two-month trial and those recruited in December won’t be done till February.)

The treatment is administered at home via a helmet-like device equipped with eight antennas that looks a bit like a large swimming cap. Participants receive the therapy for an hour in the morning and an hour at night. Each of the antennas on the device is roughly equivalent to a cellphone in terms of power, says Arendash.

Neither Knight nor Arendash are

informed of progress of the study as it’s ongoing. Once the last participant has finished his or her two-month cycle it will take some time for the data from the study to be gathered. Since this is a Phase 1 study, the primary purpose is to measure the safety of the treatment, but Arendash says a variety of Alzheimer’s markers will be measured as well, and will let them get a sense “if this treatment could be effective against Alzheimer’s or not.”

Arendash expects to receive the raw data from the study in May or June and his statisticians will begin analyzing it at that point. He is optimistic about what the results of this trial and future follow-up clinical trials might contain. “Most Alzheimer’s researchers would be very happy if we could just stop the disease’s progression, and in fact I would be happy with that as well,” he says, “but with this technology and the results that we’ve seen in the Alzheimer’s mice, we believe there is a decent chance that we could, with the right set of parameters, and the right treatment paradigm, reverse the disease in humans.”

Arendash indicated that Knight and his patent, which NeuroEM has exclusive rights to, will be important for improving upon the existing head device in clinical trials following the present Phase 1 trial. “Eric’s patent contains a broad range of parameters and tools that could be most important for maximizing the chances that electromagnetic technology could be therapeutic in humans,” Arendash says.

For his part, Knight says, “It’s really rare that as an inventor I get a chance to impact the world in general.” He adds, “Many inventions help people in various ways whether it’s for sports or hobbies or home accessories, and those are all great, but making a fundamental difference in the health and well-being of people would be a whole different level.” ■



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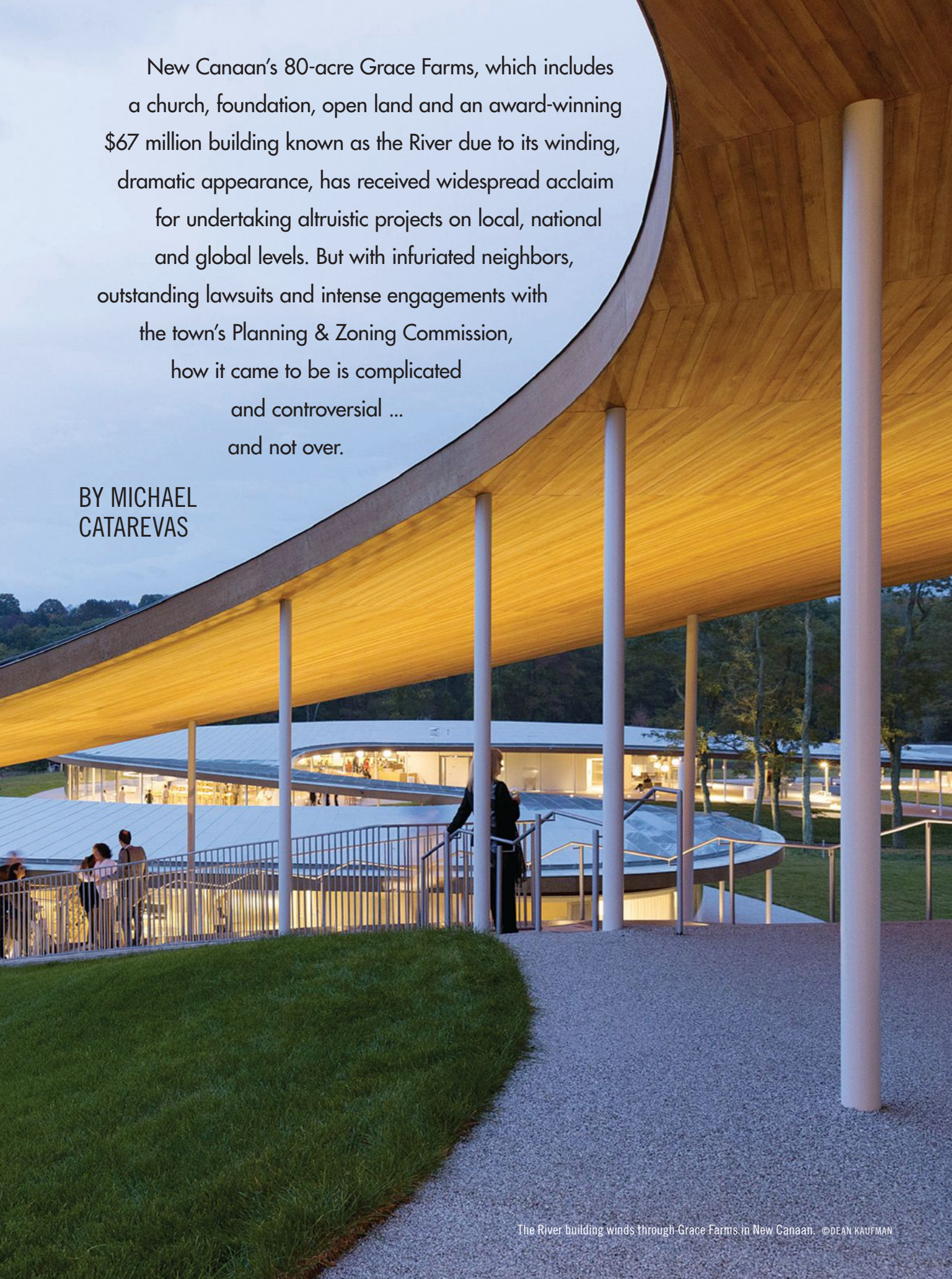
GRACE

UNDER FIRE



New Canaan's 80-acre Grace Farms, which includes a church, foundation, open land and an award-winning \$67 million building known as the River due to its winding, dramatic appearance, has received widespread acclaim for undertaking altruistic projects on local, national and global levels. But with infuriated neighbors, outstanding lawsuits and intense engagements with the town's Planning & Zoning Commission, how it came to be is complicated and controversial ... and not over.

BY MICHAEL
CATAREVAS



When Robert Prince stepped forward to address the New Canaan Planning & Zoning Commission on the night of Dec. 18, 2012, it seemed like just another resident seeking approval of just another permit under consideration.

It would prove to be anything but.

The request was for non-denominational Grace Community Church to build a permanent sanctuary on a large parcel of land in New Canaan on the Connecticut/New York border.

And Prince was no ordinary property owner. He was and is co-chief investment officer at Bridgewater Associates in Westport, the world's largest hedge fund. He works very closely with Ray Dalio, Bridgewater's founder and one of the wealthiest people in the world.

The vision Prince presented to P&Z members was of a bucolic, pastoral environment the public would be welcome to enjoy, with a large Sunday service and some small-scale meetings and other church-related events.

"My wife Sharon and I were among the founding families of Grace Community Church and were also primary organizers of the Grace Farms project," he said that night. "We want it to be a peaceful respite. We don't want it to be a busy, crazy place. It would be completely undermined if we organized lots of activities with lots of traffic."

But as unearthed by Michael Dinan, owner and editor of the newcanaanite.com news website, the Grace Farms Foundation Certificate of Incorporation included wording that conflicted with what Prince told P&Z. It said activities may include "sponsoring, conducting and supporting conferences, seminars, discussion groups, lectures and other programs to educate the general public about and raise public awareness of faith and the reconciliation of faith, philosophy and science, social justice movements, the arts and culture"; "sponsoring and supporting artistic and cultural activities, including, without limitation, workshops and performances in the areas of music, dance, theatre, and fine arts, lectures and seminars, in order to educate and enrich the general public and the local community"; and "cooperating with other charitable organizations whether local, national, or international, for any of the foregoing purposes."

Though Grace Farms neighbors and nearby New York burghs expressed trepidation over potential issues such as traffic and security, in 2013 P&Z granted the special permit allowing Grace Community Church at Grace Farms to become a reality.

While the congregation had been holding its Sunday service in a local school auditorium, this would be no group of parishioners struggling to scrape together funds for a no-frills church on the outskirts



Sharon Prince is the chairwoman and president of Grace Farms Foundation. ©IWAN BAAN

of town. Well, it would be on the outskirts of town, but it was extremely well-heeled church members who paid \$40 million for the acreage of what had been a horse farm, then poured tens of millions of dollars more into creating their vision. What they built has already become renowned.

THE RIVER DELIVERED

Construction began in August 2013 and would last for two years. The Tokyo-based Sanaa architectural firm was chosen to design a structure Grace Farms now characterizes as "the fluid integration of inside and outside space, producing environments rich in social and spiritual potential."

Known as the River because of the way it meanders through the rolling terrain, the building of glass, concrete, steel and wood is in essence a single long roof, which seems to float some 10 to 14 feet above the ground as it twists and turns across the landscape. At the top is the eye-pleasing, state-of-the-art sanctuary/indoor amphitheater.

Winding below are a library, community area where food and drinks are available, tea pavilion, offices and gymnasium/multi-purpose space.

The completed project has drawn unanimous raves and won multiple awards.

"Grace Farms is a new kind of public space," says Sharon Prince, who is chairwoman and president of Grace Farms Foundation, a private nonprofit organization established in 2009. "From the beginning, we thought about how an open environment with mission-driven architecture could communicate with the world. The River building, with its transparent volumes, abundant communal spaces, and transcendent views of the

landscape, provides the ideal environment from which to develop our initiatives of justice, nature, arts, community and faith, leading to new collaborations and opportunities to advance grace and peace in our region and around the world."

As the building evolved, so too did the foundation, whose board of directors includes Robert and Sharon Prince, Cable and Broadcast Hall of Fame member David Verklín, Yale Center for Faith and Culture Director Dr. Miroslav Volf, and *Esquire* magazine Editor in Chief Jay Fielden, among others.

Each of the initiatives has a leader, and they often work together on projects.

Justice — Initiative director Krishna Patel: "Our focus is to combat modern-day slavery in all its forms through action-oriented strategies and multi-sector partnerships. People are often shocked to learn that since 2008 there have been 634 cases of suspected child trafficking in Connecticut."

Nature — Initiative director J. Mark Fowler: "At Grace Farms we connect kids and families to nature. Our mission is preserving open space and restoring wildlife and wildlife habitat. We're trying to make nature as exciting for kids as they find video games and television."

Arts — Initiative director Kenyon Adams: "We work at the intersection of the visual, literary and performing arts. We invite inter-disciplinary cohorts who spend time in a workshop addressing an ethical concept. We started with empathy, then focused on awe and silence, with joy next. Performance/art/written works result."

Community — Initiative director Lisa Lynne Kirkpatrick: "I oversee and facilitate the engagement of not-for-profit organizations. We've been fortunate to

Grace Farms Foundation's future venue under construction in October 2014. ©DEAN KAUFMAN



A NEIGHBOR'S ANGST

Paul Ostling and his attorney wanted to talk.

It was when Grace Farms and the New Canaan Planning & Zoning Commission were continually sparring over a wide range of issues concerning the abutting properties. I was covering the story for the New Canaan *Advertiser* newspaper. Ostling, a Grace neighbor, decided to go



Paul Ostling

into detail about what it was like to be in his position.

A lawyer himself and former partner at Ernst & Young, Ostling says he felt tricked by Grace Farms' stated intentions from the very beginning. He and his wife, Danita,

had purchased a \$5.3 million New Canaan home in 2007 that at the time was next to a horse farm.

"We bought a house five miles outside of town," he says. "It was kind of in nowhereville, if you know what I mean. We found out they [Grace Farms] were going to build a church. I was concerned because the parking lot was going to be near our fence. So we were invited up and met [Grace Farms President] Sharon Prince [and other Grace officials]. They were lovely people. We talked about it, my wife and I. How do you fight people who want to open a church?"

"We explained our concerns. They said it was only a church, with 700 people

expected on Sundays. You buy a four-acre house that's miles out of town, pay \$60,000 a year in taxes, there's not even a store nearby; it's what you're looking for.

"We began negotiating with them. We got a property valuation and were told our house was going to go down in value. They said just as a church [next door] our property was going to lose more than \$1 million in value.

"I go to church, and we said yes to a church, and yes to losing property value. But I didn't say yes to a non-church [Grace Farms Foundation] that has a full-service kitchen and walking tours next to my property line without any security.

"What I resent the most is being made to look like some ugly NIMBY [not in my backyard] person because I said yes to a church."

Ostling pointed out that New Canaan's town planner at the time, Steve Kleppin, agreed Grace Farms was in violation of its special permit and needed to request modification from the originally approved Grace Community Church. Five homeowners, including the Ostlings, had sent P&Z a letter insisting Grace Farms was in violation of its permit.

Joseph Rucci, Ostling's attorney, said his client and other neighbors felt aggrieved over issues that included security, traffic, the environment, privacy and land value. He expressed outrage that the town admitted there were violations but was doing little about it.

"The town has totally abrogated its responsibility," he says. "If it was anyone else, they'd shut you down; they'd issue a

stop order.

"My client agreed and accepted a church. But they don't have just a church. The tranquility of their property has been seriously impaired by what's going on there now, illegally. And nobody in town is doing a damn thing about it.

"The town is continuing to allow them [Grace Farms] to increase the use of this property in violation of the existing special permit. They are not protecting the neighbors or the citizens of the town under their own regulations. Where is the town here? They know this is wrong and do nothing? This is supposed to be a church and foundation built on truth and honesty, and that's what's missing in this scenario: truth and honesty."

Ostling complained about several things that have still not been fully resolved.

"There are environmental issues, light and noise issues, and walking paths next to my property," he says. "Am I supposed to hire guards? If the town is going to have thousands of people coming to this area, what's their responsibility to protect me, and the people who go there?"

"If the town decides it's not going to be just a church, then it better do an awful lot of thinking that takes into account the interests about safety, health, welfare, the environment and pollution to a lot of people. And not just the neighbors at that point.

"They [Grace Farms] baited and switched the town and built a global enterprise. Does the town now decide they want a global enterprise there? If they do then I guess they've taken my property."

Asked to comment on the Ostling and Rucci assertions, they emailed this response:

"Grace Farms Foundation is confident that it is operating within the scope of the special permit, and we look forward to addressing questions at the [next] P&Z hearing. We are committed to respecting the P&Z process, and thus will not comment further."

That P&Z hearing led to others, until September 2017 when a text amendment was approved by P&Z that would allow Grace Farms Foundation to exist as a charitable organization and a club, in addition to Grace Community Church.

On Nov. 1, 2017, the Ostlings filed a lawsuit in Superior Court in Stamford seeking to have P&Z's decision overturned, claiming it was made "illegally, arbitrarily, and in an abuse of its discretion" in several ways. | MICHAEL CATAREVAS |



develop partners that have the expertise in the interfaith dialogic realm. And so leveraging those relationships to do some of their programs here has been ideal.”

Faith — While the vision for Grace Farms was inspired by Christianity, they say people of all faiths or no faith are welcome, and they hope to build bridges of empathy across lines of religious difference and pursue the common good within a diverse community.

Grace Farms opened in the fall of 2015. It was welcomed by most of the local citizenry as a tremendous addition to New Canaan, especially with its noble humanitarian goals. There have been some impressive events and accomplishments in the relatively short existence.

In 2016 it hosted a seminar, *Preventing Another 9/11: The Way Forward*, which included MSNBC’s Joe Scarborough and Mika Brzezinski, Connecticut Sens. Chris Murphy and Richard Blumenthal, and Congressman Jim Himes.

Patel, a former federal prosecutor, spearheads the foundation’s involvement against human trafficking. One result was the passage of state legislation enhancing trafficking statutes by increasing investigations and prosecutions. The law was drafted at Grace Farms and signed by Gov. Dannel P. Malloy in 2016.

On a continuing basis a space grant program includes more than 80 organizations across all initiatives, while a large number of artists, scholars, musicians, dancers and poets have performed and/or worked there in various capacities.

“It was kind of a gift to the town,” says Greg Reilly, editor of the *New Canaan Advertiser* newspaper. “It’s always been highly regarded, with people coming from far away to visit. They’ve been trying to do their best for others, and it’s hard to criticize that.”

But there was trouble ahead.

INTENSITY QUESTIONED

“About six months after Grace Farms opened was the first time in a public meeting that someone gave voice to this



Kenyon Adams is the director of the foundation’s arts initiative. ©DEAN KAUFMAN

idea that what was happening there was exceeding what was allowable under the permit P&Z had issued,” says Dinan, who has covered the Grace Farms story from its beginning.

Indeed, Grace Farms Foundation was moving forward with its initiatives that included many meetings, events and activities that some people, including especially eight or so Grace Farms neighbors, believed not to be allowed under the original permit granted by P&Z.

Grace Farms and its neighbors made attempts to work things out in regard to parking lot location, screening, lighting and other issues, with limited success. Things would soon take a turn for the worse as the neighbors formally protested in a group letter to New Canaan P&Z Chairman John Goodwin that Grace Farms violated many times, and in different ways, the permitted use of its site.

“A review of the Grace Farms events calendar makes clear that the vast majority of activities sponsored by the Foundation at the site since October 2015 are not ancillary, or related in any way to the activities of a religious institution,” the letter said.

At a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting

in May 2016, then-Town Planner Steve Kleppin said that such activities “may not necessarily be consistent with the terms and conditions of the special permit, and also with what the [P&Z] commission thought they were approving back in 2013.”

In June 2016 Kleppin sent Sharon Prince a letter, saying that after much study and consideration he agreed there were activities at Grace Farms that exceeded what was allowed by their permit.

“A common sentiment I hear expressed is that the property was approved as a church with ancillary uses, but it now appears that the ancillary uses associated with the Foundation have become the principal use, while the church itself is the ancillary use,” he wrote.

He encouraged Grace Farms to submit a modified special permit application that would cover the foundation’s activities.

GRACE RESPONDS

While not admitting any wrongdoing, Grace Farms, through attorney Edward O’Hanlan, filed an application in September 2016 to amend its permit. Countering Kleppin’s assertions, O’Hanlan claimed Grace Farms simply sought to

Grace Farms, as seen from overhead during the latter stages of construction, won the coveted Pritzker Architecture Prize. ©IWAN BAAN



THE 'LAND USE' ISSUE

Grace Farms is a New Canaan story, but it includes issues that could affect any Connecticut town or homeowner, the most notable being land use.

Most suburbanites would likely be highly indignant if a neighbor was allowed to turn their garage into a store, with shoppers taking up street parking and walking on their lawn.

Think it can't happen? It likely won't, but it could. All it would take, at least to apply for multiple principal uses, is the same kind of text amendment to the town's land use regulations that was passed by New Canaan's Planning & Zoning Commission.

Of course it's a stretch, but Grace Farms went from a sleepy little church to an evolving, much more heavily trafficked global charitable organization and club, to the great dismay of many neighbors.

Although there are outstanding lawsuits, there is little doubt Grace Farms is here to stay. P&Z approved the text change last September, validating Grace Farms Foundation as a philanthropic organization and club [see main story].

While neighbors say Grace Farms hurts their land values and that the text change allows anyone to seek a similar P&Z accommodation, others see it differently, saying the benefit of having Grace Farms in New Canaan far outweighs any negatives, perceived or otherwise.

"The appeal attorneys representing the neighbors made was that the change allowing Grace Farms to have more than one primary-use designation was not only a concern for people living where there is an institution in a residential zone (like Grace Farms, the YMCA or a hospital) but it opens up the town to an entirely new type of application," says Michael Dinan, editor of the newcanaanite.com website. "And town attorney Ira Bloom conceded that. What if you are a resident and now want to have a religious use [in your house]?"

What if you want to be a club? There was no mechanism in the zoning regulations as they existed prior to the text change that would allow you to do that. You couldn't become whatever you want, but now you can apply to."

Whether having Grace Farms or any large organization as a neighbor is a plus or minus depends on who you talk to. Former New Canaan Town Planner Steve Kleppin said he used to get complaints from neighbors of the town's expanding YMCA, but when a few of those same people put their houses up for sale they made sure prospective buyers knew they were within walking distance of the Y.

Whether Grace Farms helps or hurts neighboring land values is another topic with opposing viewpoints.

Don Poland, senior vice president and managing director of urban planning at East Hartford-based Goman+York, was hired by Grace Farms neighbors to present his expert opinion of the matter to P&Z.

He told the commission in a report that granting the text change would "exacerbate the issues of appropriate scale, intensity of use and threats of encroachment across all zones, residential and commercial, in New Canaan.

"The proposed amendment will apply to all properties in the residence zones. Any owner of residentially zoned property could apply for multiple principal uses on their site, including all institutional uses."

He said those uses could include elderly housing, congregate care, bed and breakfasts, private school, daycare and private recreation.

John Engel, a realtor with Halstead in New Canaan, sloughed off that notion, saying places like Grace Farms actually raise house and land prices.

"New Canaan property values are predicated on four things: the downtown, the schools, the commute

and low taxes," he says. "Low taxes are absolutely dependent on having a thriving commercial zone, with low vacancy rates, serving food and selling products to residents and outsiders.

"As any of our restaurant owners will tell you, [they] cannot depend on a population of 20,000. [They] depend on the marketing of New Canaan as a destination. A robust commercial zone is what separates New Canaan from Wilton, Weston and Ridgefield, with their statistically equal schools but 40 percent higher mill rates. That difference accounts for a 47 percent higher value of homes in New Canaan."

Regarding Grace Farms' value to the town, Tucker Murphy, executive director of the New Canaan Chamber of Commerce, felt it was a no-brainer.

"I spoke at one of the [P&Z] hearings about the positive impact Grace Farms has for the business community," she says. "The public speaks of the 'new normal' when referring to what makes a town thrive. For me a fundamental feature of that is monitoring the ongoing change in retail on a local and national level. Not solely internet shopping but also changes in shopping patterns. Experiential shopping seems to be a trend that is rising. People want to visit communities where the experience of simply being there is satisfying."

Murphy cites a recent town-commissioned study reporting that places like Grace Farms attract visitors from throughout the region and beyond who are willing to spend significantly while in New Canaan.

"The Glass House, Carriage Barn Arts [Center], Silvermine Arts Center and Grace Farms have all seized the opportunity to create diverse programs and made New Canaan a cultural tourism destination," she says. "This positive effect has increased downtown commerce and fired up a fierce local pride." | MICHAEL CATAREVAS |



differentiate the religious institution, Grace Community Church, from the charitable institution, Grace Farms Foundation.

“The reason they felt they needed the secular permit, the nonreligious permit, is because governmental entities around the world, like the U.N., [are] prohibited from working with a religious institution,” Reilly says. “That’s why Grace Farms went back [to P&Z]. They need to work with more groups, and to work with more groups they need to be non-religious.”

O’Hanlan said in the application that Grace Farms felt all of its activities “fall within the recognition and grant of authority specifically set forth” in the special permit.

As for Robert Prince’s 2012 statements to P&Z that could be interpreted as conflicting with Grace Farms’ actual intentions, Grace Farms’ new application noted that “it is the terms of the Special Permit itself, and not the transcript of the proceedings or even the deliberations of P&Z itself — or its ‘consensus’ four years later — that constitute the operative approval.”

Dinan’s take is to the point.

“What Grace Farms said when faced with the argument that they’d won approval on the strength of a promise to be a strictly church-related function was that if the town didn’t get clarification from what they had in mind, too bad,” he says. “Let’s get clarification now.”

In the build-up to what would be a long and contentious P&Z meeting to consider the Grace Farms request to amend its permit, attorney Amy Zabetakis, representing several Grace neighbors, sent a letter to P&Z saying, “The current application seeks such an expansive set of activities with so few limitations that it is in essence seeking formal approval to convert Grace Farms from a home for a church, under the existing special permit, into an operation with virtually unrestricted capacity to pursue a myriad of nonprofit and for-profit and revenue-raising initiatives.”

Shortly before the scheduled P&Z meeting in January 2017, Grace Farms temporarily withdrew its amended special permit application, citing as the reason P&Z’s retaining of a new planner to study the application.

At the same time, the neighbors got a public boost when New Canaan First



Dancer Matthew Rushing performs with trumpet player Ron McCurdy. ©SASHA ARUTYUNOVA



An underground gymnasium is part of the River building. ©IWAN BAAN

Selectman Rob Mallozzi III, the town’s highest-ranking elected official, said when speaking to the New Canaan Men’s Club that he thought the organization had gone well beyond its original stated intentions.

“Clearly when that group came before Planning & Zoning they came as a church with ancillary activity,” he said. “And that appears to be different than what’s going on now. So I think a review is in order. As much as we enjoy what they are bringing to the community, the fact is, I believe, when I look at the tapes, that they came in under one pretense and it’s morphed into something more.

“I think they’re doing the right thing, and the town is doing the right thing by saying come on back, lay the cards on the table, let’s see how intense the use is, and then we’ll decide. I’m happy to go down that road rather than their continuing the animosity.”

Months went by, and in April 2017 Grace Farms decided that instead of seeking an amended special permit, it would ask that

a text amendment be made to the New Canaan zoning regulations, allowing it to add charitable organization and club to the already approved religious-institution status. Its neighbors were furious over what they considered an end-around by Grace Farms to get its way [see Land Use sidebar].

P&Z’S RULING

Finally, in late September 2017, after having voted 5-4 in favor of amending the zoning regulations, P&Z

unanimously voted to grant Grace Farms Foundation a new special permit allowing multiple principal uses, but included 100 conditions that needed to be met.

P&Z said in its resolution that “based on the significant public comments in the record, the Commission finds that Grace Farms Foundation provides substantial economic, social and cultural benefits to the community through its activities and in making the property accessible to the public.”

Responding the next month and claiming its rights as a religious organization were being violated, Grace Farms sued the town of New Canaan over the 100 conditions.

Dinan wasn’t surprised by the tactic.

“It’s not unexpected after such a major application to have these administrative appeals,” he says. “The approval from P&Z came with restrictions like limitations on the number and size of events, and no for-profit, revenue-generating events.

“The only recourse anyone has once P&Z makes its decision is to go to the courts. P&Z tries to be as accommodating to both

sides as it can. Which means that in some ways both sides are happy and in some ways both sides are unhappy. In this case there are lawsuits from both sides.”

The Grace Farms tact was not wholly unexpected because back in November 2016, at a particularly contentious P&Z meeting, O’Hanlan had cautioned that, if necessary, Grace Farms could and would invoke its religious designation to try to legally trump opposition to its expanding agenda.

“You can’t tell someone they can only exercise their religion so many times without getting into constitutional problems,” he said at that meeting. “Grace Farms now operates under a religious institution. It could rest on that. Your attorney could suggest you couldn’t stop it from that point.”

What he was referring to, and would specifically include in the Grace Farms Foundation legal appeal, filed Oct. 19, 2017, in Stamford Superior Court, was the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 [RLUIPA], a federal law which, among other things, gives churches and other religious institutions a way to avoid burdensome zoning law restrictions on their property use.

The appeal states: “The [P&Z] Resolution imposes limitations on religious activity on the site, that, upon information and belief, were not intended, and that are in violation of [RLUIPA]. Grace Farms Foundation asks the court to sustain the appeal, direct P&Z to revise the resolution in accordance with the law, award costs and grant such other relief as in law or equity may apply.”

In essence, Dinan says, “they [Grace Farms] were designated under the zoning regulations for religious-institution use,

then went to the town to expand their use. And now that they’re appealing, they’re back to invoking RLUIPA in the lawsuit. And in fairness, under the zoning regulations, they still are considered a religious institution.”

Several Grace Farms neighbors also filed legal appeals, asking the court to reverse P&Z’s decision to approve the special permit.

STARTING OVER?

Even with still-pending lawsuits by neighbors, and waiting for a Superior Court judge’s ruling regarding the Grace Farms appeal, things generally seemed to be winding down.

They were not.

A bizarre development muddled the waters anew when, on Nov. 28, 2017, Grace Farms Foundation filed new applications with P&Z for a text amendment and special permit identical to what P&Z had already approved.

Why? Because New Canaan town attorney Ira Bloom requested the foundation, through O’Hanlan, to do so.

Why? To “address the alleged procedural defects” that form the basis of some of the neighbors’ legal appeals, Bloom explained in a Nov. 20 letter to O’Hanlan.

The long and short of it is that neighbor lawsuits, in addition to claiming economic damage, also asked that P&Z’s decision be overturned because they felt the post-hearing legal notices were “defective, incomplete and misleading” and failed to meet the requirements of state law or the town’s zoning regulations.

Bloom opined that instead of awaiting a judge’s ruling on the neighbor lawsuits, which could take a year or more and be adverse to the town, holding new,

expedited hearings and making sure there are no procedural defects made sense.

“These new matters will be placed on an upcoming agenda for a public hearing, with all requisite filings and notices to ensure that no procedural defects can be claimed,” Bloom wrote. “Although these would indeed be new applications, my hope is that by incorporating the earlier records, the time required [by P&Z] to hear and to decide them will be significantly condensed.”

The new application process is expected to start in January.

Reilly was asked if Grace Farms Foundation was guaranteed to get the same positive P&Z vote after filing the new applications.

“Absolutely not,” he says. “There is no fait accompli here. It’s a new application.”

Why then would the foundation agree to refile and chance losing when it already had approvals?

“You’d have to ask O’Hanlan or Sharon Prince that,” Reilly says.

Connecticut Magazine reached out to both for this story. Prince was said to be traveling. Through a spokesperson she eventually provided a few paragraphs lauding Grace Farms but declined to answer any questions directly. O’Hanlan responded to requests for comment by email, writing, “Thank you for your email and call. However, my policy is not to speak to the press about a client or a pending matter.”

Dinan and Reilly, editors of New Canaan’s go-to website and newspaper of record, respectively, agree the Grace Farms saga has been and continues to be compelling.

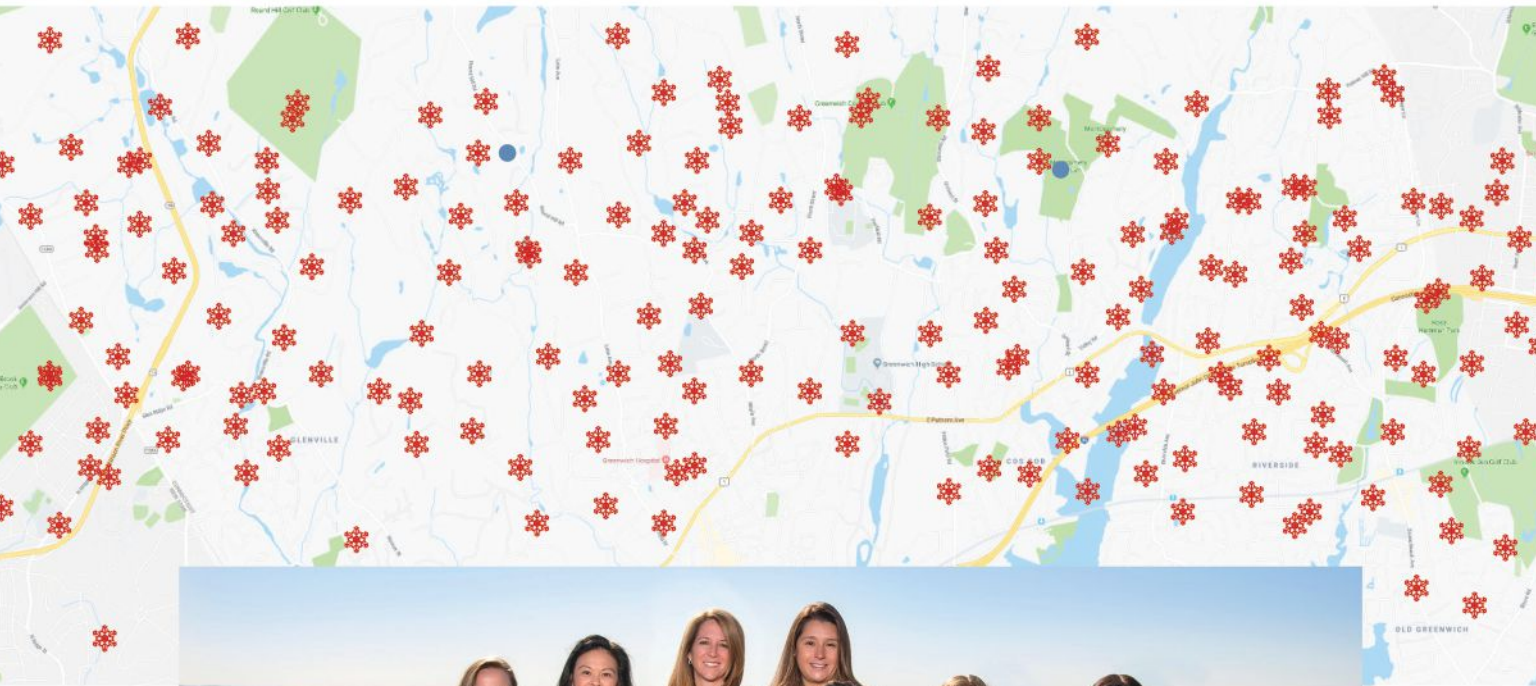
“It was a complicated case for the town and it will be a complicated case for the court,” Dinan says. ■



The 86,000-square-foot River building extends down a gentle slope through both indoor and outdoor spaces to blend into the landscape.
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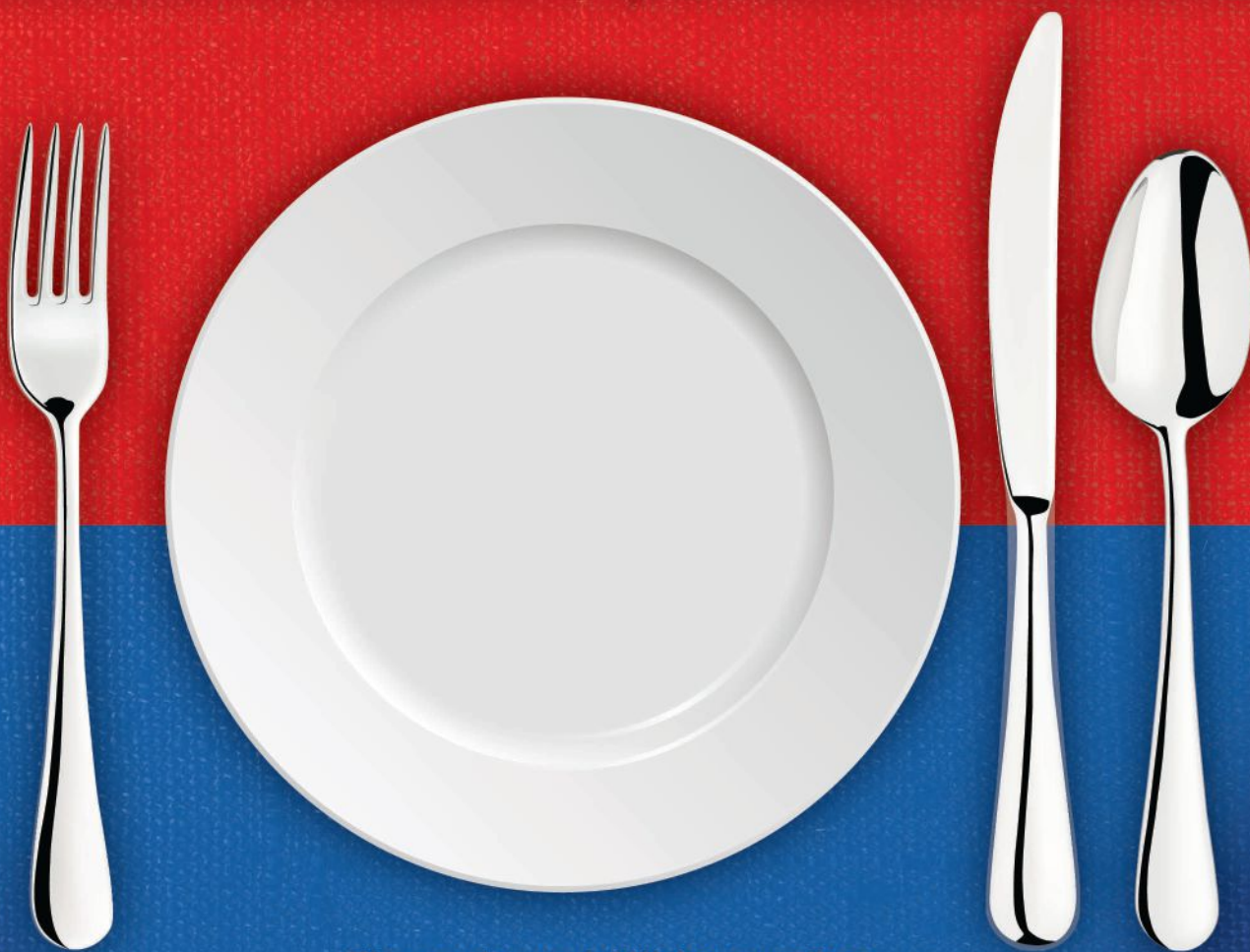
Thank You for the Love & Support!

2018 BEST RESTAURANTS

readers' choice



experts' picks



The results are in! We're revealing the best places to dine out in the state, as chosen by readers and a panel of food experts. The response we received was excellent, and our lists are bigger than ever, with more categories and more winners. Dig in!

best
**Restaurant
for Overall
Excellence**

- 1st** The Spinning Wheel
Redding
- 2nd** Sal e Pepe
Newtown

best **New
Restaurant**

- 1st** Friar Tuck's Tavern
Mystic
- 2nd** Rebeka Fresh Pasta
Restaurant
East Lyme
- 3rd** Red Rooster Pub
Newtown



★ readers'
CHOICE
2018

best for **Fine Dining**

- 1st** Union League Cafe New Haven
- 2nd** Bella'Gio Cheshire
- 3rd** Sal e Pepe Newtown

best **Fast Casual**

- 1st** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** Westbrook Lobster Clinton/
Wallingford

best **Romantic Restaurant**

- 1st** Union League Cafe New Haven
- 2nd** Sal e Pepe Newtown
- 3rd** ON20 Hartford

best **Late-Night Restaurant**

- 1st** Friar Tuck's Tavern Mystic
- 2nd** Red Rooster Newtown



THE SPINNING WHEEL

REDDING

Best for Overall Excellence (1st place)

Best American (1st place)

Best Clam Chowder (2nd place)

best Chef for General Excellence

- 1st** David Pottie Friar Tuck's Tavern, Mystic (t)
Jean Pierre Vuillermet Union League Cafe and Bar Bouchée, New Haven/Madison (t)
- 3rd** Ferdinand Plaku Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant, East Lyme

best Chef (up and coming)

- 1st** Kelment "Frank Jr" Loga Bella'Gio, Cheshire
- 2nd** Ferdinand Plaku Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant, East Lyme
- 3rd** David Pottie Friar Tuck's Tavern, Mystic

best Bartender

- 1st** Korab "Kory" Loga Bella'Gio, Cheshire
- 2nd** Graham Andrews Sal e Pepe, Newtown
- 3rd** Jeff Mastroianni Chow Food and Beverage Co., Clinton

best American

- 1st** The Spinning Wheel Redding
- 2nd** The Cottage Westport
- 3rd** Chow Food and Beverage Co. Clinton

best French

- 1st** Union League Cafe New Haven
- 2nd** Bar Bouchée Madison

best Italian

- 1st** Bella'Gio Cheshire
- 2nd** Sal e Pepe Newtown
- 3rd** Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant East Lyme

best Chinese

- 1st** Toro Newtown
- 2nd** New Wok Newtown

best Greek

- 1st** Pontos Taverna Norwalk (t)
The Greek Guy Wallingford (t)
Caffe NV Waterford (t)

best Japanese

- 1st** Toro Newtown
- 2nd** Midnight Ramen New Haven
- 3rd** Kawa Ni Westport

best Thai

- 1st** Thai Delight Newtown
- 2nd** Thai Spice Norwalk
- 3rd** Spice Club Niantic

best Vietnamese

- 1st** Pho Vietnam Danbury
- 2nd** Bui Vietnamese Cuisine Manchester

best Mexican

- 1st** Cuckoo's Nest Old Saybrook
- 2nd** El Coyote Brookfield/Monroe/ New Milford
- 3rd** Puerto Vallarta Middletown/Orange/ Danbury

best Latin American

- 1st** Crave Ansonia
- 2nd** Mezon Danbury

best Indian

- 1st** Indigo Indian Bistro Manchester
- 2nd** Kolam Newtown
- 3rd** Coromandel Cuisine of India Newtown/Orange/Darien/Southport/ Stamford

MEZON

REDDING

Best Latin American
(2nd place)

Best Spanish
(2nd place — tie)

best Steakhouse

- 1st** The Capital Grille Hartford/Stamford
- 2nd** Washington Prime Norwalk (t)
Barbarie's Black Angus Danbury (t)

best Burgers

- 1st** White Horse Country Pub and Restaurant New Preston
- 2nd** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 3rd** Red Rooster Pub Newtown (t)
Haywire Burger Bar Westbrook (t)

best Pub Grub

- 1st** White Horse Country Pub and Restaurant New Preston
- 2nd** Red Rooster Pub Newtown
- 3rd** Friar Tuck's Tavern Mystic

best Bistro

- 1st** Bar Bouchée Madison
- 2nd** Sal e Pepe Newtown
- 3rd** Le Penguin Westport

best Roadside Spot

- 1st** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** Denmo's Southbury

best Food Truck (savory)

- 1st** Chow Food and Beverage Co. Clinton
- 2nd** Mercado Hartford/Glastonbury (t)
Brick & Basil Norwich (t)

best Food Truck (sweet)

- 1st** Sugar Clinton/East Haven/Madison
- 2nd** NoRA Cupcake Company Middletown/Canton (t)
Cocoanuts Norwalk/Stamford (t)

best Vegetarian/Vegan

- 1st** It's Only Natural Middletown
- 2nd** Claire's Corner Copia New Haven
- 3rd** G-Zen Branford

best Outdoor Dining

- 1st** Bella'Gio Cheshire
- 2nd** White Horse Country Pub and Restaurant New Preston
- 3rd** Heibeck's Stand Wilton

best Deli

- 1st** Rein's Deli Vernon
- 2nd** Gaetano's Monroe/Stratford/Westport
- 3rd** Butcher's Best Country Market Newtown

best Breakfast

- 1st** Mystic Depot Roasters Mystic
- 2nd** Rise Mystic
- 3rd** The Shack East Lyme (t)
Cristy's Madison/Westbrook (t)

best Brunch

- 1st** White Horse Country Pub and Restaurant New Preston
- 2nd** Rise Mystic
- 3rd** Washington Prime Norwalk (t)
Cuckoo's Nest Old Saybrook (t)

best Lunch

- 1st** White Horse Country Pub and Restaurant New Preston
- 2nd** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 3rd** Sal e Pepe Newtown

best Appetizers

- 1st** ON20 Hartford
- 2nd** Union League Cafe New Haven
- 3rd** Sal e Pepe Newtown

best Desserts

- 1st** Union League Cafe New Haven
- 2nd** Rebeka's Fresh Pasta Restaurant East Lyme
- 3rd** Sal e Pepe Newtown (t)
ON20 Hartford (t)



CATHERINE AVALONE

BISTRO MEDITERRANEAN

WESTBROOK

Best Middle Eastern/Mediterranean (2nd place)

best Beer Bar

- 1st** The Hops Company Derby
- 2nd** Westbrook Lobster
Clinton/Wallingford
- 3rd** Red Rooster Pub Newtown

best Brewery

- 1st** Two Roads Brewing Co. Stratford
- 2nd** Stony Creek Brewery Branford
- 3rd** Thimble Island Brewing Co.
Branford

best Cocktails

- 1st** Bella'Gio Cheshire
- 2nd** ON20 Hartford
- 3rd** Chow Food and Beverage Co.
Clinton

best Wine Selection

- 1st** Union League Cafe New Haven
- 2nd** Nouveau Monde Wine Bar
+ Bistro Sandy Hook
- 3rd** ON20 Hartford

best Hotel Bar

- 1st** Water's Edge Westbrook
- 2nd** Madison Beach Hotel Madison (t)
The Irons: Hilton Mystic Mystic (t)

best Dive Bar

- 1st** Monkey Farm Old Saybrook
- 2nd** Scottish Dave's Pub Clinton (t)
John's Mystic (t)

best Sports Bar

- 1st** Sliders Berlin/Southington/
Wallingford/Plainville/Middletown/
West Hartford (t)
The Blind Rhino Norwalk (t)
- 3rd** Cover Two Sandy Hook

best Value

- 1st** White Horse Country Pub and
Restaurant New Preston (t)
Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant
East Lyme (t)
- 3rd** Heibeck's Stand Wilton

best Hidden Gem

- 1st** Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant
East Lyme
- 2nd** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 3rd** Chow Food and Beverage Co.
Clinton

best BYOB

- 1st** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** The Place Guilford
- 3rd** Nostrano Italian Eatery Monroe (t)
Half Moon Coffee & Grille Cafe
Wallingford (t)

best Cheap Eats

- 1st** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** Sycamore Drive-In Bethel

best Chicken Wings

- 1st** Dew Drop Inn Derby
- 2nd** J. Timothy's Taverne Plainville
- 3rd** Archie Moore's
Fairfield/Milford/New Haven/
Wallingford/Derby

best Chili

- 1st** Cuckoo's Nest Old Saybrook
- 2nd** Heibeck's Stand Wilton (t)
Chow Food and Beverage Co.
Clinton (t)

best Doughnuts

- 1st** Neil's Donuts and Bake Shop
Meriden/Wallingford
- 2nd** Beach Donut Shop
Clinton/Branford
- 3rd** Flanders Donut, Bagel &
Bake Shop East Lyme (t)
Donut Crazy Stratford/Shelton/
New Haven/Westport (t)

best Fries

- 1st** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** Chow Food and Beverage Co.
Clinton

best Grilled Cheese

- 1st** Heibeck's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** Caseus New Haven
- 3rd** The Whey Station Middletown



RISE
MYSTIC

**Best Breakfast (2nd place)
Best Brunch (2nd place)**



BAR SUGO

NORWALK

Best Meatballs (1st place) | Best Pizza (1st place)

CHRISTIAN ABRAHAM



best Hot Dogs

- 1st** Heibek's Stand Wilton
- 2nd** Blackie's Hot Dogs Cheshire
- 3rd** Super Duper Weenie Fairfield (t)
Johnny Ad's Old Saybrook (t)

best Ice Cream

- 1st** Ferris Acres Creamery Newtown
- 2nd** Heibek's Stand Wilton
- 3rd** Arethusa Bantam/New Haven

best Meatballs

- 1st** Bar Sugo Norwalk
- 2nd** Spiga New Canaan
- 3rd** Savoy Pizzeria & Craft Bar
West Hartford

best Pizza

- 1st** Bar Sugo Norwalk
- 2nd** Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana
New Haven/Danbury/West Hartford/
Fairfield/Manchester/Waterbury/
Mohegan Sun
- 3rd** Modern Apizza New Haven

best Pies

- 1st** Lyman Orchards Middlefield (t)
Bishops Orchards Guilford (t)
- 3rd** The Drunk Alpaca Shelton

best Ramen

- 1st** Mecha Noodle Bar
Fairfield/New Haven/Norwalk
- 2nd** Midnight Ramen New Haven
- 3rd** Kawa Ni Westport

best Bakery

- 1st** Sift Mystic (t)
The Drunk Alpaca Shelton (t)
- 3rd** Flanders Donut, Bagel
& Bake Shop East Lyme

best Cheese Shop

- 1st** Fromage Fine Foods & Coffees
Old Saybrook (t)
Caseus New Haven (t)
- 3rd** Cato Corner Farm Colchester (t)
109 Cheese & Wine Ridgefield (t)

best Fish Market

- 1st** Number One Fish Market
Hamden (t)
Flanders Fish Market East Lyme (t)
Atlantic Seafood Old Saybrook (t)

best Butcher

- 1st** Butcher's Best Country Market
Newtown
- 2nd** Grass & Bone Mystic

best Coffee Shop

- 1st** Mystic Depot Roasters Mystic
- 2nd** Cheshire Coffee Cheshire
- 3rd** Cafe Xpresso Newtown

best Wine Shop

- 1st** Amity Wine & Spirit Co.
Hamden/New Haven
- 2nd** The Wine Thief New Haven (t)
Cask'n Keg Mystic (t)

best for overall excellence

The Cottage: *"The Cottage in Westport is not as tiny as it used to be but still very intimate in its hard-to-see location on the Post Road. Do whatever you have to in order to make the discovery. Chef Brian Lewis is turning out what may be the most stunning food anywhere in Connecticut."*

— DOUGLAS CLEMENT,
EDIBLE NUTMEG
CONTRIBUTOR, FORMER
CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE
EDITOR AND WRITER

Arethusa al tavolo:

"Hands down the best dining experience in Litchfield County. Award-winning Arethusa cheese is made just around the corner, and the famous cows producing all the dairy served here live just up the road." — LORA KARAM AND BEVERLEY CANEPARI, UNLOCKING LITCHFIELD AND UNLOCKING FAIRFIELD

Zinc: *"Great food and service aside, the atmosphere is ideal for a romantic night out in the Elm City."*

— MARISA NADOLNY,
THE DAY FOOD WRITER



THE WHELK

WESTPORT

- Overall Excellence
- Best Seafood

CHRISTIAN ABRAHAM

best new

Cricket Car Hop: *"My childhood spot that had closed and recently returned!"* — DAYM DROPS (DAYMON PATTERSON), YOUTUBE FOOD CRITIC

Grass & Bone: *"Remarkable sandwiches with otherworldly ingredients."* — MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY, CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE WRITER

best for OVERALL EXCELLENCE

Aranci 67 Wilton
Arethusa al tavolo Bantam
Aspen Old Saybrook
The Cottage Westport
Fresh Salt Old Saybrook
Millwright's Simsbury
Present Company Simsbury
Shu West Hartford/Fairfield
Union League Cafe New Haven
The Whelk Westport
The White Hart Salisbury
Zinc New Haven

best NEW

Amis Trattoria Westport
Butchers & Bakers Farmington
The Cook & The Bear West Hartford
Cricket Car Hop Stratford
Goats N' Roses Marlborough
Grass & Bone Mystic
Himalaya Cafe Old Saybrook
Jesup Hall Westport
Kala Bistro North Haven
Republic at the Linden Hartford
Osa Middletown
Shakahari Old Saybrook
Taproot Bethel
V's Trattoria Hartford
Zohara Mediterranean Kitchen West Hartford

★ experts'
PICKS
2018

best AMERICAN

The Blue Hound Cookery & Taproom

Ivoryton

Good News Cafe Woodbury

The Goose American Bistro & Bar

Darien

Jesup Hall Westport

Match Norwalk

Mill Street Bar & Table Greenwich

Moxie Madison

Red 36 Mystic

Republic at the Linden Hartford

The Spread Norwalk

Moxie: "They have really stepped up their game. Roasted marrow bones with cherry compote was a standout. Great bartenders." — ROBERT RABINE, SHORELINE TIMES FOOD WRITER

best FRENCH

Àvert Brasserie West Hartford

Bistro Versailles Greenwich

Le Fat Poodle Old Greenwich

Le Petit Café Branford

Luc's Ridgefield

Present Company Simsbury

Sucre Sale Ridgefield

Union League Cafe New Haven

Luc's: "Luc's — my French bistro love. The vibe, the eats, the feeling like you're not in Fairfield County are always a winner. All about the mussels and the steak frite, oh, and the cassoulet, too." — ALICIA GHIO, LOCAL FOOD ROCKS FOUNDER AND WRITER, TRIBUNA NEWSPAPER CULINARY COLUMNIST

best CHEF

Tyler Anderson

Millwright's, Simsbury

Carlos Baez The Spread and

El Segundo, Norwalk

Bun Lai Miya's, New Haven

Geoff Lazlo

Mill Street Bar & Table, Greenwich

Brian Lewis The Cottage, Westport

Jeffrey Lizotte

Present Company, Simsbury

Dan Magill

Arethusa al tavolo, Bantam

Bill Taibe Jesup Hall, The Whelk

and Kawa Ni, Westport

Jeff Taibe Taproot, Bethel

James Wayman Oyster Club, Mystic

Matt Wick Osa, Middletown

best INDIAN

Coromandel Cuisine Newtown/Darien/

Orange/Southport/Stamford

House of Naan New Haven

INDIA West Hartford

Indigo Indian Bistro Manchester

Kolam Newtown

Naatiya Indian Restaurant Bloomfield

Priya Indian Cuisine Rocky Hill

Tikkaway Grill New Haven

Utsav Indian Cuisine Wethersfield

best ITALIAN

Alforno Ristorante & Brick Oven

Pizzeria Old Saybrook

Aranci 67 Wilton

Ballo Italian Restaurant Mohegan Sun

Bar Sugo Norwalk

Carbone's Ristorante Hartford

La Marea Ristorante Old Saybrook

La Tavola Ristorante Waterbury

La Zingara Bethel

Luce Middletown

O.C. Kitchen-Bar Rocky Hill

Olives and Oil New Haven

Restaurant Bricco West Hartford

Roma Ristorante Italiano Oakville

Salute Hartford

Tarry Lodge New Haven/Westport

Treva West Hartford

Aranci 67: "With house-made pasta, creative daily specials and some of the best desserts I've ever had, Aranci 67 continues to impress with its old-school, flavor-over-flash menu."

— ERIK OFGANG, CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE SENIOR WRITER

AMIS TRATTORIA

WESTPORT

• Best New Restaurant



best LATIN AMERICAN/SPANISH

Cactus Rose Wilton
Chango Rosa Hartford
Cibus Stratford
Costa del Sol Hartford
Crave Ansonia
Olea New Haven
Planeta Brazil Danbury
Rubamba New Haven
Valencia Luncheria Norwalk

Crave: *"The Latino twists to New American food make diners smile and want to come back for more."* — GARY STOLLER, *SHORTESCAPES.NET* PUBLISHER

best MEXICAN

Baja's Orange
Don Carmelo's Mexican Grill & Tequila Bar Norwalk
El Mercado Hartford
El Paso Plainville
Mexicali Rose Newtown
Papaya Mexican Grill Danbury
Rincon Taqueria Norwalk
Sayulita Glastonbury
Taqueria Mexico Wallingford

Papaya Mexican Grill: *"Hole-in-the-wall family joint with some of the best tacos around."* — ALICIA GHIO, *LOCAL FOOD ROCKS* FOUNDER AND WRITER, *TRIBUNA* NEWSPAPER CULINARY COLUMNIST

best MIDDLE EASTERN/ MEDITERRANEAN

Ambrosia Cromwell
Lebanese Cuisine Bethel
Midpoint Istanbul Fine Dining New Haven
Mykonos Mediterranean Restaurant Newington
Noujaim's Bistro Winsted
Tangiers International Market Hartford
Zohara West Hartford

Ambrosia: *"Little restaurant with crepes made right there, a nice staff, and great Greek iced coffee."* — JENNA KIJOWSKI AND JESSICA BISHOP, *CT AIN'T SO BAD*



LE FAT POODLE

OLD GREENWICH

• **Best French**

BOB LUCKEY JR.

best ASIAN

Asian Bistro Rocky Hill
Great Taste New Britain
Ki Asian Bistro & Sushi Danbury
Midori Hamden
Shu West Hartford and Fairfield
Taste of China Clinton/New Haven
Toro Newtown

Shu: *"Tucked away in a strip mall by an Asian supermarket in West Hartford, Shu delivers high-quality Szechuan food like no other restaurant in Connecticut. Flavors are intense but well balanced, and stand worlds apart from the usual cadre of Chinese restaurants. A second location is in Fairfield."* — NICK CAITO, *RHODE ISLAND BEVERAGE JOURNAL*, FORMERLY OF THE *HARTFORD COURANT* AND *HARTFORD MAGAZINE*

best PHO/RAMEN

Kawa Ni Westport
Mecha Noodle Bar Fairfield/Norwalk/New Haven
Nom-eez Bridgeport
Pho 501 East Hartford
Pho Boston West Hartford
Pho Vietnam Danbury
Ramen-Ya Berlin

Pho Vietnam: *"This small BYOB restaurant is always packed for good reason. One of the original pho hot spots in Connecticut, it was opened by Tony Pham before he partnered with Richard Reyes on the Mecha Noodle Bar concept. Though it lacks the flair of Mecha Noodle Bar, it has the same great flavors!"* — ERIK OFGANG, *CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE* SENIOR WRITER

best SUSHI

Hana Sushi Manchester
Ki Asian Bistro & Sushi Danbury
Miya's New Haven
Sushi Red Plainville
Toro Newtown
Yokohama New Milford

Miya's: *"What chef/owner Bun Lai has done in the sustainable food scene is impressive. What he does with his menu is impossible. Yet he does it — and does it like no one else on Earth."* — STEVE WOOD, *CTMQ.ORG* FOUNDER AND WRITER

best ROADSIDE

Blackie's Hot Dogs Cheshire

Capitol Lunch New Britain

Clam Castle Madison

Clamp's Hamburger Stand
New Milford

Costello's Clam Shack Noank

El Pollo Guapo Wethersfield

Heibeck's Stand Wilton

K LaMay's Steamed Cheeseburgers
Meriden

Merritt Canteen Bridgeport

Rawley's Drive-In Fairfield

Super Duper Weenie Fairfield

Ted's Restaurant Meriden

Super Duper Weenie: "Long before food-truck fare attained hipster cred, Gary Zemola was preaching — and practicing — the gospel of carefully sourced, fastidiously crafted fast food: namely hot dogs, french fries, and relishes and condiments he makes himself in house. There's a reason why people like me keep coming back, decade after decade, and wait like vultures for our orders to emerge from Gary's grill: Nothing tastes as good." — SARAH GOLD, FORMER *NEW YORK TIMES* DINING CRITIC

TAPROOT

BETHEL

• Best New



THE EXPERTS

Nick Caito, *Rhode Island Beverage Journal*, formerly of the *Hartford Courant* and *Hartford Magazine*

Alycia Chrosniak, *cteatsout.com* founder and editor in chief

Douglas Clement, *Edible Nutmeg* contributor, former *Connecticut Magazine* editor and writer

Adeline Crites-Moore, *Adeline Jessica Social Media*

Andrew Dominick, *Westchester Magazine* and *ctbites.com* writer

Daym Drops (Daymon Patterson), YouTube food critic

Alicia Ghio, *Local Food Rocks* founder and writer, *Tribuna* newspaper culinary columnist

Sarah Gold, former *New York Times* dining critic

James Gribbon, *ctbites.com* contributor

Lora Karam and Beverley Canepari, *Unlocking Litchfield* and *Unlocking Fairfield*

Jenna Kijowski and Jessica Bishop, *CT Ain't So Bad*

Michael Lee-Murphy, *Connecticut Magazine* writer

Marisa Nadolny, *The Day* food writer

Erik Ofgang, *Connecticut Magazine* senior writer

Chef Plum, host of *Restaurant Road Trip* on News 8

Robert Rabine, *ShoreLine Times* food writer

Gary Stoller, *shortescapes.net* publisher

Ken Tuccio, host of *First Thing* on 95.9 The Fox

Steve Wood, *ctmq.org* founder and writer

Albie Yuravich, *Connecticut Magazine* editor in chief

best DELI

A&S Italian Fine Foods Fairfield
Bradley & Wall Gourmet Foods Madison
Coffees Country Market East Lyme
D&D Market Wethersfield
Gaetano's Stratford/Monroe/Westport
Harbor Harvest Norwalk
Katz's Deli Woodbridge
Kensington Market Berlin
Rein's Deli Vernon
Rosa's Deli Wallingford
Sierra Delicatessen Norwalk
The Underground Deli New Britain
Wilton Deli Wilton

A&S Italian Fine Foods: *"A zillion sandwiches are on the menu, and they stack them high whether you ask for cold cuts or veggies. The salads are simple and delicious, and the meats are so attractive that you will wind up bringing some home for dinner or the freezer."* — GARY STOLLER, *SHORTSCAPES.NET* PUBLISHER

Gaetano's: *"Gaetano's is the perfect Italian deli. Select from an overhead menu of sandwich options and you can't go wrong, but dream up anything you want, and you can have it. The prepared food case is stocked with pasta dishes, cured olives, stuffed filets, and anything else they feel like making, and the shelves are lined with ingredients for Italian cooking. Get the Mecoman sub and thank me later."* — JAMES GRIBBON, *CTBITES.COM* CONTRIBUTOR

best FOOD TRUCK

Chief Brody's Banh Mi New Haven
Eggz Bethel
The Green Grunion Danbury
HAPA Stamford
La Patrona New Haven
The Meat Truck New Haven
Mexcalli New Haven
Munchies Food Truck New London
Nosh Hound Stamford
Rice and Beans Danbury
The Whey Station Middletown

La Patrona:

*"my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song."*

— MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY (BY WAY OF POET
W.H. AUDEN), *CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE* WRITER



CASK REPUBLIC

NEW HAVEN

• Best Beer Bar



CHRISTINA HENNESSY

best BEER BAR

@ The Corner Litchfield
b Restaurants Fairfield/Glastonbury/Milford/
 Simsbury/Stamford/West Hartford
Barcade New Haven
The Beer Collective New Haven
The Blind Rhino Norwalk
Brewport Bridgeport
Cask Republic New Haven
Coalhouse Pizza Stamford
Craft 260 Fairfield
Eli Cannon's Tap Room Middletown
The Hops Company Derby
J. Timothy's Taverne Plainville
McLadden's West Hartford/Simsbury
MiKro Beer Bar Hamden
My Place Pizza and Restaurant
 Newtown

Eli Cannon's Tap Room: "It's a bar. It has ... 'character.' And it has perhaps the best and most expansive (without being too expansive) and consistently great tap list in the state." —

STEVE WOOD, CTMQ.ORG FOUNDER AND WRITER

best COCKTAILS

116 Crown New Haven
Bin 228 Glastonbury
Cure Unionville
The Essex Essex
Geronimo Fairfield/New Haven
Jesup Hall Westport
Little River Restoratives Hartford
M/BAR Mystic
Match Norwalk
Ordinary New Haven

Cure: "Man, the cocktail program here reminds me of something that would be in NYC. You can also get a bacon flight. Yup, winner, winner." —

CHEF PLUM, HOST OF RESTAURANT ROAD TRIP ON NEWS 8

116 Crown: "Toward the far south end of Crown Street, away from the clubs, theaters and most foot traffic is a cocktail bar worth the walk. Herbs and aromatics sit atop a softly glowing alabaster bar, and the cocktail options run from subtle to bracing and bold to those for professionals. Among the latter is the Chantme: gin and chartreuse with a peaty scotch float that's like a vaccination against the mundane."

— JAMES GRIBBON, CTBITES.COM CONTRIBUTOR

best BARBECUE

Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue
 Hartford/Windsor/South Windsor
Chango Rosa Hartford
Chester's Barbecue Groton/Clinton
The Cue Danbury
Hoodoo Brown BBQ Ridgefield
Nat's Real Pit BBQ Windsor
Smokin' with Chris Southington
The Stand Branford
Taino Smokehouse Middletown

Nat's Real Pit BBQ: "There aren't enough joints employing the mustard/vinegar South Carolina style in their barbecue. Nat's does." — STEVE WOOD, CTMQ.ORG FOUNDER AND WRITER

Hoodoo Brown BBQ: "Often times at barbecue joints, places have a few good smoked meat offerings, but everything that comes off the smoker at 'The Brown Residence' is killer, especially the cracklin' skin pork belly and their juicy, salt and coarse pepper-rubbed brisket." — ANDREW

DOMINICK, WESTCHESTER MAGAZINE AND CTBITES.COM WRITER

best BURGERS

b Restaurants Fairfield/Glastonbury/Milford/
 Simsbury/Stamford/West Hartford
The Beer Collective New Haven
Bobby's Burger Palace Mohegan Sun
GoldBurgers Newington
Harlan Publick Norwalk
Harlan Social Stamford
Haywire Burger Bar Westbrook
Jack Rabbits Old Saybrook
Louis' Lunch New Haven
Match Norwalk
Prime 16 New Haven/Orange
Republic at the Linden Hartford
The Spread Norwalk
Ted's Restaurant Meriden

Republic at the Linden: "All those choices... I love the chorizo burger ... sooo good. And the place is just stunningly gorgeous! Shout out to chef Wolf!" — CHEF PLUM, HOST OF RESTAURANT ROAD TRIP ON NEWS 8

best STEAK

Barbarie's Black Angus Danbury
The Capital Grille Hartford/Stamford
David Burke Prime Foxwoods
Joseph's Steakhouse Bridgeport
JV's Taproom Plainville
Washington Prime Norwalk/Redding

best TAPAS/ SMALL PLATES

Aspen Old Saybrook
Barcelona New Haven/Fairfield/Norwalk/
 Stamford/West Hartford
Cafémantic Willimantic
Costa del Sol Hartford
El Segundo Norwalk
Kala Bistro North Haven
Locali Pizza Bar & Kitchen New Canaan
Olea New Haven
Osa Middletown
Three Sheets New Haven
Zaragoza New Milford

Osa: “Osa is Chef Matt Wick’s love letter to Connecticut and hospitality. He pours his soul into the food, starting with the ingredients he either forages himself, or sources from top local producers. Tip: Share a few of the wood-fired small plates and a bottle of one of their delightful Italian wines.” — ALCYIA CHROSNIAK, CTEATSOUT.COM FOUNDER AND EDITOR IN CHIEF

Zaragoza, New Milford: “Tapas are the answer to entrée-commitment issues, and Zaragoza is the answer to bored-taste bud problems. We love interesting ingredient combos, and Zaragoza does it so well! Also, the cocktails.” — LORA KARAM AND BEVERLEY CANEPARI, UNLOCKING LITCHFIELD AND UNLOCKING FAIRFIELD

most ROMANTIC

2 Hopewell Glastonbury
August New Haven
The Golden Lamb Buttery Brooklyn
The Hopkins Inn Warren
Le Petit Café Branford
The Mayflower Dining Room
 Washington
Millwright’s Simsbury
ON20 Hartford
Present Company Simsbury
The Restaurant at Winvian Farm
 Morris
Schoolhouse at Cannondale Wilton
Union League Cafe New Haven
Vue 24 Foxwoods
The White Hart Salisbury
Zinc New Haven

The Restaurant at Winvian Farm: “Carry on with the romanticism at one of their cottages. Just sayin’.” — LORA KARAM AND BEVERLEY CANEPARI, UNLOCKING LITCHFIELD AND UNLOCKING FAIRFIELD

best DESSERTS

Aranci 67 Wilton
Arethusa al tavolo Bantam
Cavey’s Manchester
The Drunk Alpaca Shelton
Flatbread Company Canton
Forever Sweet Bakery Norwalk
NoRA Cupcake Company Middletown
Rooster Co. Newington
Savour Cafe & Bakery Centerbrook
SoNo Baking Co. Norwalk/Darien
Union League Cafe New Haven

The Drunk Alpaca: “The pies and cakes at The Drunk Alpaca are the sort of things I want to eat every day. Everyone always talks about a balanced diet and eating healthy, but the grub that The Drunk Alpaca churns out could probably even convince The Rock to give up on his workout routine, put on 300 pounds and change his name to The Boulder.” — KEN TUCCIO, HOST OF FIRST THING ON 95.9 THE FOX

best BREAKFAST/ BRUNCH

Cristy’s Madison/Westbrook
Dakota Steakhouse Rocky Hill
Fresh Salt at Saybrook Point Inn
 Old Saybrook
King’s Newtown
The Little Goose Fairfield
Mill Street Bar & Table Greenwich
Mothership Bakery & Cafe Danbury
O’Rourke’s Diner Middletown
Sahadi’s Hotties New Britain
Spicy Green Bean Glastonbury
The Spread Norwalk
Valencia Luncheria Norwalk

Valencia Luncheria: “While this is certainly not a traditional brunch, it’s a delicious one. From chorizo omelettes to the utterly addictive green sauce (put it on everything, please) Valencia’s brunch is a great way to start your Sunday morning.” — ADELINE CRITES-MOORE, ADELINE JESSICA SOCIAL MEDIA

SMOKIN’ WITH CHRIS

SOUTHINGTON

• Best Barbecue



ARNOLD GOLD

best OUTDOOR DINING

Abby's Place Essex

The Blue Oar Haddam

Captain Scott's Lobster Dock
New London

Elm City Social New Haven

L'Escale Greenwich

Rooftop 120 Glastonbury

Shad Row Rocky Hill

Washington Prime Norwalk/Redding

The Wharf at the

Madison Beach Hotel Madison

**White Horse Country Pub and
Restaurant** New Preston

The Wharf at the Madison Beach

Hotel: *"Just gorgeous dining right on the water. Fantastic food. Clean, refreshing, local seafood and more."*

— CHEF PLUM, HOST OF *RESTAURANT ROAD TRIP ON NEWS 8*

THE WHARF

MADISON

• Best Outdoor Dining

best VEGETARIAN/ VEGAN

Bloodroot Bridgeport
Claire's Corner Copia New Haven
Flora West Hartford
G-Zen Branford
Heirloom Food Co. Danielson
ION Middletown
Shandals Vegetarian Cafe Bridgeport
The Sweet Beet Granby
Three Girls Vegan Creamery Guilford
Udupi Bhavan Middletown

best HIDDEN GEM

Àvert Brasserie West Hartford
Bar Bouchée Madison
Ecco Rooftop Eatery & Bar Bethel
Edo II Danbury
Hidden Valley Eatery Washington Depot
Lebanese Cuisine Bethel
Miss Barbara Jean's Soul Food
 Kitchen Norwalk
Nouveau Monde Wine Bar + Bistro
 Sandy Hook
Oliva on Main Bethlehem
Pappadella's Restaurant Danbury
The Rustic Cafe East Lyme
Sails Bar & Grill Rowayton
Shu West Hartford
Sushi X2 Stamford
Teff Stamford

Teff: "The Ethiopian and Eritrean menu might not be familiar to the average restaurant goer, but it's good. Like really good. The staff knows exactly how to educate you on grub that you might not be familiar with, and you find yourself enjoying an entirely different type of experience while longing for more. Great stuff." — KEN TUCCIO, HOST OF *FIRST THING ON 95.9* THE FOX

best PIZZA

BAR New Haven
Brick + Wood Fairfield
Bufalina Guilford
Butchers & Bakers Farmington
Camille's Wood Fired Pizza Tolland
Colony Grill
 Stamford/Fairfield/Milford/Norwalk
Domenick & Pia Downtown Pizzeria
 Waterbury
Fat Cat Pie Co. Norwalk
Flatbread Company Canton
Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana
 New Haven/Fairfield/Danbury/Manchester/
 West Hartford/Waterbury/Mohegan Sun
Letizia's Pizza Norwalk
Lorenzo's Restaurant Sandy Hook
Modern Apizza New Haven
PizzaCo Stratford
Sally's Apizza New Haven
Zuppardi's Apizza West Haven

Flatbread Company: "Three-way tie: Flatbread Company in Canton, BAR in New Haven and Modern Apizza in New Haven. Besides terrific flatbread/pizza, Flatbread and BAR have great, simple salads, and Flatbread's desserts are decadent. Fans of Modern swear by a certain kind of pizza; lately, I have been addicted to artichoke and spinach." — GARY STOLLER, *SHORTSCAPES.NET* PUBLISHER

Zuppardi's Apizza: "With its fresh shucked clams and massive chunks of house-made sausage, Zupps deserves a place among the New Haven-style greats. You can also grab Zuppardi's pies up the road in Derby at The Hops Company. Or head to the pizzeria's website and order a six-pack of 10-inch pies that can be customized to your heart's content and shipped to someone who will treasure every bite." — ALBIE YURAVICH, *CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE* EDITOR IN CHIEF

best CHICKEN WINGS

The Blind Rhino Norwalk
Cheek's Chicken & Waffles Manchester
Dew Drop Inn Derby
J. Timothy's Taverne Plainville
Smokey O'Grady's East Lyme
Walrus + Carpenter Bridgeport

best AFFORDABLE

Domenick & Pia Downtown Pizzeria
 Waterbury
Donahue's Madison Beach Grille
 Madison
Dry Dock Bar & Grille Norwalk
El Mercado Hartford
Lucky Taco Manchester
Mexicali Rose Newtown
Mindy K Deli & Catering Old Saybrook
Pepper Pot Southington

Dry Dock Bar & Grille: "Dry Dock is my go-to lunch spot. Sit me down, give me a bowl of their killer chili and their Nemo sandwich, I'm a happy man. Plus, it doesn't break the bank. I don't need to go take out a personal loan just because I want to eat a meal there twice a week." — KEN TUCCIO, HOST OF *FIRST THING ON 95.9* THE FOX

best SEAFOOD

Liv's Oyster Bar & Restaurant
 Old Saybrook
Oyster Club Mystic
The Place Guilford
Red 36 Mystic
Shell & Bones Oyster Bar and Grill
 New Haven
Stowe's Seafood West Haven
Westfair Fish & Chips Westport
The Whelk Westport

BARCELONA

NEW HAVEN/FAIRFIELD/NORWALK/
 STAMFORD/WEST HARTFORD

• Best Tapas/Small Plates



AUTUMN DRISCOLL



*Thank you for another year
of excellence*

Best Overall Excellence

CT MAGAZINE 2018 EXPERT PICK

Best Chef Tyler Anderson

CT MAGAZINE 2018 EXPERT PICK

Most Romantic

CT MAGAZINE 2018 EXPERT PICK

PAST HONORS FROM CT MAGAZINE INCLUDE:

OVERALL EXCELLENCE EXPERT PICK 2013, 2016 & 2017, **BEST AMERICAN**
EXPERT PICK 2015, 2016 & 2017, **BEST DESSERTS** EXPERT PICK 2014, **BEST**
SERVICE EXPERT PICK 2013, **BEST NEW RESTAURANT** EXPERT PICK 2013



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Connecticut Magazine 2018 Expert Pick
BEST NEW RESTAURANT

HAVING A PARTY?
Think of us for your next gathering.

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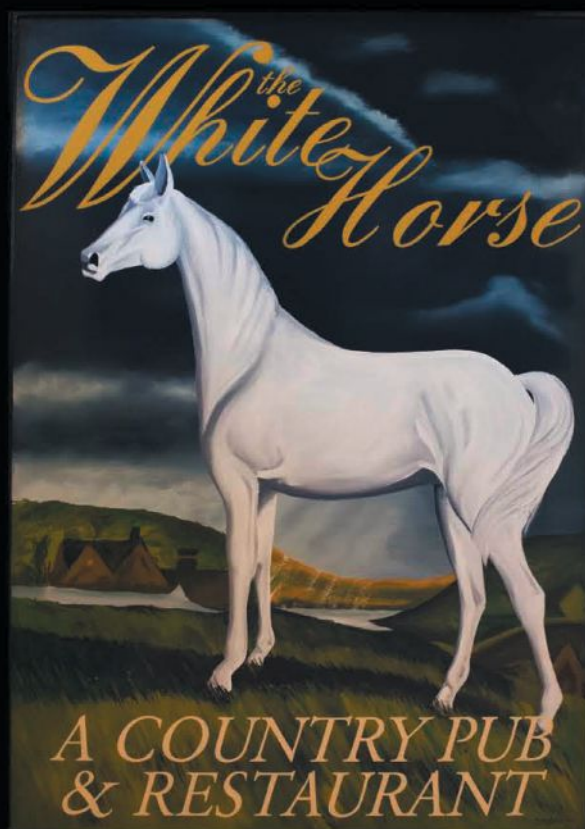


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Black pearl salmon barbacoa

PHOTOS: MARA LAVITT

Close to Home

WITH AN EVER-CHANGING MENU AND FAMILIAR FEEL, THE ESSEX TAKES INSPIRATION FROM THE RIVER COMMUNITY

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

It's a pretty bold move to name your restaurant after the town it's in, especially with the word "The" before it. By calling itself "The Essex," Colt Taylor's new venture in the Centerbrook section of its namesake town is making something of a statement about the authoritative quality of its offerings. Across its menu, its decor, and its plans for the future, The Essex is entitled to the claim made by its name: the restaurant has the feel of familiarity and comfort, while orienting itself toward the upscale and the high end, much like this area of the Connecticut River Valley.



The Essex
Essex

The collection of towns that hug the Connecticut River and Route 9 running south from Middletown to where the river empties into Long Island Sound have a unique quality to them. They are not overdeveloped with sprawl and mini-malls, but are packed with the type of cultural institutions that, when present in small towns, can create a beautiful sense of community. The towns along this section of the river are also intimately tied to that river, imbued with its soul.

Taylor says that in the five months after The Essex opened, the menu has changed some 15 times, but the one dish that has

remained consistent captures the essence of that community: the bacon and clam noodles. A variation on the rich, deep flavors of kotteri ramen, the dish is centered around a 48-hour white pork broth, flavored with clam juice and peppered with clams and slabs of pork belly. The result is a dish that might be what ramen would look like if it had originated in coastal New England. "To me that's the dish that symbolizes what we're trying to do with the food here, which is we're taking flavors of New England clam chowder and injecting them with a very traditional Japanese home-style cooking," Taylor says.

Home-style is a pertinent word choice here, as the opening of The Essex is something of a homecoming for Taylor, whose cooking career has taken him from New York City to Los Angeles to Seattle to Miami. Taylor was thinking about opening a new place in Miami, but circumstances made him want to come back home to be closer to his family. (His first cooking job was at the now-closed Saybrook Fish House in Old Saybrook.)

The decor and atmosphere of the place, too, strives to hit the sweet spot between familiarity and the high end. The restaurant is laid out in an open format with a single large dining room wrapped around the open kitchen. From more or less any table in The Essex, a diner can see the full extent of the kitchen, as well as a bar area. Behind the bar is a mural, painted by Taylor's mother, that reminds us, in case there was any doubt, this is



Clockwise from top: Chef/owner Colt Taylor in the open kitchen at The Essex; prime New York strip; a nautical mural behind the bar painted by Taylor's mother; cinnamon bun with ice cream and frosting (back) and a chocolate-lover's tasting plate.

Essex, Connecticut. Several other nautical-themed paintings are sprinkled throughout the room, and add a subtle local flavor, without belaboring the point. A fireplace provides a feeling of coziness.

While it may not be intended, the bar with its mural, the fireplace and the seafaring theme makes The Essex feel like a stripped-down, deconstructionist take on the Essex institution, the Griswold Inn. But Taylor doesn't want diners to feel as though the design of the restaurant

should make them feel anything less than utterly at home. "This is my super-casual, super-open, no-dress-code [place]. It's built into an open kitchen and an open bar so that there's energy pouring in from everywhere. ... Just have fun. Be loud, be whatever," he says.

In sections of the menu, too, Taylor deconstructs that which is familiar. For the Caesar salad, he takes apart the components and puts them back together for a salad that asks you to think about it

a little bit more carefully. The anchovies in the salad are arrayed across the spears of lettuce in a way resembling sculpture as much as food.

On my visit, a dish that sounds like a Shoreline classic — fried oysters — is served with poblano pepper, soy, sesame and ginger, arrayed in a minimalist presentation that, once again, forces the diner to consider each ingredient.

While much of the menu is firmly in the fine-dining category in terms of its

price point, The Essex offers several themed prix fixe menus throughout the week, all at relatively affordable levels. Tuesday is burger night, when \$20 will get you a beer or glass of wine and a burger. Choose from an array of different and creative takes on the American staple. Wednesday is Italian night, when a \$60-for-two prix fixe menu nets you an appetizer, entrée, dessert and (!) a bottle of wine. If the porcini and scallop risotto off the regular menu is any indication of The Essex's confidence in its Italian dishes, diners are in for a treat. Going in the other direction pricewise, for \$125 diners can have a one-on-one meeting with Taylor, in which he will design a multi-course tasting menu based on your own affinities and aversions. Taylor says he'll serve anything between seven and 22 courses. ("Until you wave the white flag.")

The dessert menu is a bit more restrained in its ambition, but is just as good. A cinnamon bun with ice cream and frosting was perfectly nice, and a chocolate-lover's tasting plate had about as much chocolate variety as anyone could hope for.

At some point in early 2018, The Essex will open its kitchen even further, offering classes for 10-12 people from 4-6:15 p.m., when students will then serve the food they've cooked to friends or family. Taylor advises prospective students to check the website for details.

Not satisfied with goodies such as themed food nights and cooking classes? The Essex also has a market, just off the dining room floor, where you can buy local dairy, fresh baked bread, homemade gelato, and so on.

AMBIANCE Modern and minimalist, but with touches of comfortable familiarity.

SERVICE Taylor is known to sit down and have a chat with guests, and deliver the food himself. Wait staff is patient and helpful.

FOOD Adventurous haute cuisine, but like the design, has familiar tastes spun into exotic creations.

The Essex

30 Main St., Centerbrook
860-237-4189, theessex.com

Price range: Appetizers \$16-\$18 (crispy fried Niantic Bay oysters \$18, Caesar salad \$16), entrées \$21-\$36 (bacon and clam noodles \$28, porcini and scallop risotto \$34), desserts \$10.

Hours: Tue.-Sat. 5-10 p.m., Sun. noon-8 p.m., closed Mon.

Wheelchair accessible

Bethel's Lebanese Cuisine

A One-of-a-kind Find

Restaurants have so overused the word "fresh" when describing their ingredients that it has been stripped of most of its meaning. But when chef Hassan Bou Hodiv of Lebanese Cuisine in Bethel says he only uses "fresh" ingredients, he means it. Like, really means it.

The shelf life on the restaurant's tabbouleh: 30 minutes.

"After a half-hour, it's not good for a customer," he says.

This is hard to believe, but take a bite of this tabbouleh filled with bright green parsley and mint, accented by finely chopped onions and tomato coated in olive oil and lemon juice, taste the way the flavor of each ingredient pops, crisp and clean, and your doubts will evaporate.

The tabbouleh is the best I've had and the other Middle Eastern cuisine offered at the restaurant — including addictive falafel sandwiches and shawarma — is as good as, and arguably better than, any you can get in New York City. Though it has little online presence, an unassuming location on Stony Hill Road in Bethel, and a name that lacks flair, Lebanese Cuisine is an elite restaurant.

It was opened five years ago by Sam Baddour. A few years ago, Baddour brought Hodiv onboard as chef and partner and says he told him, "It's your restaurant. Do whatever you want."

Hodiv transformed the spot, drawing on the culinary traditions taught to him as a child in Lebanon. "My grandmother, always she cooked. I helped her," he says. He moved to the U.S. in 2004, and prior to his work at Lebanese Cuisine he ran Falafel House in West Haven.

He says the type of authentic Lebanese cuisine he offers can't even be found at restaurants in Lebanon. "New chefs don't have these recipes; only the old women cook like this."

Hodiv matches these traditional recipes with a passion for quality ingredients. He grows vegetables in a garden in the back of the restaurant, and says that when he shops for supplies, "I don't care about price. I go looking for good quality."

This quality shines in dishes such as the falafel sandwich (\$7) with warm, crisp falafels wrapped in a pita with all manner of fresh vegetables, from chopped cucumbers to cabbage, and the equally divine shawarma.

Open for lunch and dinner, the BYOB restaurant also offers a variety of platters, salads and sides where fresh flavors and uncommon spices (even when compared to other Middle Eastern restaurants) shine. The meat or vegetarian grape leaves (\$7), labneh (yogurt) (\$5), mujaddara (lentils and rice) (\$5), green beans (\$5) and other side dishes — some on the menu, others not listed but available — are worth trying and savoring. As is the kibbeh platter (\$15) and sides of hummus, baba ghanoush and the aforementioned tabbouleh (all \$5). In addition, the tea has hints of mint and is the perfect accompaniment to the meal.

You enter the restaurant through the back into a Lebanese grocery store that offers a wide assortment of imported goods. The dining room is in the front and has an inviting decor; a large picture of an old hookah lounge decorates one wall and upbeat Middle Eastern music plays over the PA system. All this creates a welcoming atmosphere that is casual and relaxed enough for lunch, but fancy enough for dinner.

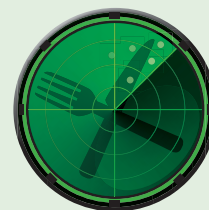
This sense of welcoming comes from Hodiv, whose passion for what he does is instantly apparent. During early visits to the restaurant, before he knew who I was or that I was writing a story, he sent free side dishes home. When I told him I was writing the story he insisted I come in for a complimentary sampling of some of the dishes I hadn't yet tried (admittedly, he didn't have to twist my arm).

"It's a family business," Hodiv says. "People who work here are friends of mine."

Like the sentiment about freshness, this is a statement many restaurant owners make about their places, but it rarely feels justified. At Lebanese Cuisine it is authentic, like the food itself. | **ERIK OFGANG** |



ERIK OFGANG



UNDER THE RADAR

Lebanese Cuisine

23 Stony Hill Road, Bethel
203-617-0604,
authenticlebanesecuisine.com
Hours: Daily 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

Wheelchair accessible



The phorrito packs Vietnamese pho ingredients into burrito packaging.

Holy Guacamole

MEXIPHO IN GLASTONBURY OFFERS VIETNAMESE-MEXICAN MASHUP

BY ERIK OFGANG

If burritos are awesome and pho is awesome, then:

burritos + pho = awesomeness²

That's the college dorm-type logic behind MexiPHO in Glastonbury and its signature creation, the phorrito.

Surprisingly, this logic is sound.

Not only do pho and Mexican food go together, they're a dynamic culinary duo of complementary flavors and textures.

The restaurant, which opened in November 2016, features the order-at-the-counter and choose-your-own-ingredients system found at chains such as Chipotle and Moe's Southwest Grill. Customers can build their own pho bowls, burritos, tacos and salads while choosing from all the various ingredients normally found in either pho or burritos/tacos. Here everything is GMO- and MSG-free.

Keep to either traditional Mexican or pho flavorings, or mix things up by adding rice to the steaming bowl of pho with the aforementioned phorrito. The dish basically puts "the whole pho soup [in] a grab-and-go

burrito," owner Antonio Melendez says.

For the phorrito, alongside traditional burrito ingredients such as rice, beans and your choice of meat (options include beef, chicken and pork pastor), you fill your burrito with pho noodles, sprouts, basil and other pho spices and herbs, as well as a special phorrito sauce.

The mix sounds wacky but works.

What would already be a big, bad (in a good way) burrito gets bigger and badder thanks to the infusion of pho ingredients. The pho noodles provide an added crunch, and the extra pho spices are welcome additions. It also doesn't hurt that the ingredients are excellent; the optional guacamole is bright and full of lemon spice. Not overly spicy, the toppings have plenty of character.

Melendez, who describes himself as "Mexican, 100 percent" has a long history of working in Mexican restaurants. He was an owner of Plaza Azteca, a chain of Mexican restaurants, and says he found himself always eating pho in addition to Mexican food. One night while enjoying

pho with a buddy, he says he remarked how the only thing that would make the experience better was some tacos.

That late-night musing led to the creation of MexiPHO. He says the two styles of cuisine have "a lot of similar condiments and spices on certain things and they combine well."

He sold his stake in Plaza Azteca to focus on MexiPHO. He hopes the Glastonbury location will serve as the first of many across Connecticut and ultimately the country. He'd like to open locations in New Haven and West Hartford, but there are no definitive plans yet for expansion.

"I want to get this place established, have the established foundation, and then move forward," he says. "I don't want to rush things and have it not come out right."

So far, it seems like he's on to something.

MexiPHO

2872 Main St., Glastonbury

860-633-2198, mexipho.com

Hours: Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Wheelchair accessible

The Perfect Match

WESTPORT'S MATCH
BURGER LOBSTER OFFERS
ROADSIDE FOOD WITH
HIGH-END INGREDIENTS



PHOTO: THOMAS MCGOVERN

The Indulgence Burger: beef, lobster, foie and truffles.

BY ERIK OFGANG

A self-described “New England fanatic,” Matt Storch has long loved the roadside lobster shacks and burger stands that dot the coast from Connecticut to Maine.

This passion shines in his new restaurant Match Burger Lobster. Located next door to Fleishers Craft Butchery in Westport, in the space formerly occupied by Fleishers Craft Kitchen, the new restaurant seeks to capture roadside cuisine in a more upscale — but still relaxed and family-friendly — setting with best-in-class ingredients.

“A lot of places with this style of menu, they try to buy the cheapest meat, get frozen lobster, make it as easy as possible,” Storch says. “And that’s not what we’re doing. Our lobsters and oysters come twice a day from Norm Bloom [owner of Norwalk’s Copps Island Oysters]. We shuck them fresh; they essentially never see a refrigerator. They go right into the butter and then onto a bun, and that’s how fresh of a lobster roll you’re getting.”

He adds, it’s the “same with the burger

meat — locally raised cows, pasture raised, straight into Fleishers Craft Butchery, ground for us on a daily basis, sometimes twice a day if we need it, and then lightly formed and they go on the grill.”

Storch owns the original Match Restaurant in Norwalk and Nom-eez in Bridgeport, along with Susan McConnell and Jason Wojnarowski. He teamed with the partners for Match Burger Lobster and also brought on Bloom.

In addition to the burgers and lobster rolls featured in the restaurant’s name, there are whole lobsters, fried oysters made with the famous Bloom family oysters, house-made onion rings and french fries, large fresh salads, steamed clams, veggie burgers and foot-long hot dogs.

The star of a recent trip to the restaurant, which included some complimentary tasting items from Storch, was the hot Connecticut lobster roll (\$24). A monster heaping of 4¼ ounces of lobster is served on a hollowed-out brioche bun (this keeps the lobster meat in, Storch says), with

both the bread and lobster coated in warm butter. The lobster bursts with the fresh seafood and sunshine flavors of summer, and was among the best lobster rolls I’ve had. But as Storch points out, contrary to popular belief, New England lobsters remain in season all winter as the lobsters get sweeter in colder water.

The Match Burger (\$15) is topped with bacon and cheddar dip. For those who can’t decide between the burger and lobster roll (one of life’s great dilemmas) there is the slider combo (\$20), a mini Match Burger served alongside a mini lobster roll and chips.

There are also several tongue-in-cheek items on the menu. The intentionally over-the-top Indulgence Burger (\$59) is a beef burger with lobster, foie and truffles. Storch says it’s “gimmicky,” but also “really good, [and] super rich.” The matzo ball soup (\$5 for a cup and \$8 for a bowl) is a funny, and tasty, inside joke. When Storch was opening the restaurant, friends teased him about how extremely un-kosher the primarily meat-with-dairy-products-and-shellfish offerings would be. “I figured just as a goof I would put matzo ball soup on, and it is my mom’s matzo ball soup recipe,” Storch says. “I tend to call it the second best, because obviously it’s never as good as anyone’s mother makes.”

As at Storch’s other restaurants, dessert is a strength. Pastry chef Susanne Berne’s Key lime pie (\$8) is a must-try.

No hard liquor is offered, but the restaurant has a small but good selection of beer and wine with rosé wine slushies available as well as the Aspetuck Brew Lab’s beer, The Perfect Match, brewed exclusively for the restaurant.

The high-quality ingredients come with an added price tag, so while Match Burger Lobster is more expensive than what you might pay elsewhere for this style of food, you are getting extra quality for the extra price.

Storch says he hopes the restaurant will fill a nice niche in the area, which has lots of fancy restaurants but fewer casual spots. “I think Westport needed a casual, everyday, family-friendly [restaurant]. You can come out and have a good time with a date Friday or Saturday night, or you can come and just grab a hot dog or hamburger or lobster roll.”

Match Burger Lobster

580 Riverside Ave., Westport
203-557-8800, matchburgerlobster.com

Hours: Sun.-Thu. 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m.
Fri. & Sat. 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m.

Wheelchair accessible

A Few of Our Favorite Places

WE ASKED OUR FOOD REVIEWERS ERIK OFGANG AND MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY TO NAME THE TOP RESTAURANTS THEY'VE WRITTEN ABOUT OVER THE PAST YEAR. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID.

THE COOK & THE BEAR

WEST HARTFORD

Upscale barbecue and hot-buttered comfort food mixed with craft cocktails and beer prove a winning formula at this restaurant from Tyler Anderson, chef and owner of Millwright's in Simsbury, and Jamie McDonald, the pitmaster behind the success of Bear's Smokehouse. If dishes such as smoked pastrami, bacon-wrapped and chorizo-stuffed dates and some truly awesome biscuits sound good to you, this is a place you'll want to try. | E.O. | 860-595-3345, thecookandthebear.com

DOMENICK & PIA DOWNTOWN PIZZERIA

WATERBURY

Many of the restaurants on this list are new. Domenick & Pia's is the opposite. The beloved pizzeria has been serving up pizza by the slice and pie since 1964, and owners Domenick and Pia DeRosa and their sons continue to run the establishment. The straightforward, New York-style pizza the place is known for continues to deliver the goods. We're just sorry it took us this long to discover them. | E.O. | 203-753-3401, facebook.com/domenickandpiadowntownpizzeria

©JEFF KAUFMAN



MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY



MARA LAVITT



Clockwise from top: Taproot in Bethel; Two Wrasslin' Cats in East Haddam; Jesup Hall in Westport; Order of Fries in New Haven

GRASS & BONE

MYSTIC

I'm a sandwich guy. A good, interesting sandwich is one of my favorite food items, and I keep a mental catalogue of all the best ones I've had. I partially understand the geography of Connecticut as a map of sandwiches. This sandwich spot in Mystic, from the people behind the Oyster Club, is one of the best sandwiches I've had in a long time. The gorgeous fresh cuts of tender roast beef, served on a dense, grilled roll, with horseradish and a dipping jus stayed in my mind for weeks. | M.L.M. | 860-245-4814, grassandbonect.com

JESUP HALL

WESTPORT

Opened in 2017, the latest Westport restaurant from Bill Taibe, the chef and owner of The Whelk and Kawa Ni, did not disappoint. Initially, Bill wanted to offer tavern fare with big salads and burgers, but quickly abandoned that concept in favor of an ingredient- and chef-driven menu of locally sourced and, in some cases, foraged ingredients. The result is a restaurant with dazzlingly complex and flavorful dishes. | E.O. | 203-557-6198, jesuphallwestport.com

ORDER OF FRIES

NEW HAVEN

This one isn't as much a restaurant as a snack spot, but oh boy, is it good. The deep, rich flavors of Peter Wroe's chili and truffle sauce are a great take on the classic chili fries concept. This State Street nook works great as a lunch spot or as a late-night, post-bar nightcap. | M.L.M. | 203-691-7654, facebook.com/orderoffries

OSA

MIDDLETOWN

Even without the food, it's pretty cool to just *be* in Osa. The design of the restaurant is easily one of the most interesting of the year, if not the last 10 years. The room is encased in wooden slats along the walls and ceilings, creating an entirely singular ambiance, setting the stage for the food, which luckily lives up to the billing set by the design. The food has a country simplicity to it, and its clean, wholesome tastes are deeply comforting. | M.L.M. | 860-358-9782, osarestaurant.com

TAPROOT

BETHEL

Not to be outdone by his brother, Jeff Taibe opened Taproot over the summer with his life partner, Steph Sweeney. Located within the Bethel Cinema, Taproot is a culinary blockbuster. Jeff was previously head chef at Kawa Ni in Westport. In place of the ramen and other Japanese cuisine Kawa Ni was known for, the focus here is farm-fresh ingredients, and a freewheeling mix of French, American and other styles. The results are crave inducing. | E.O. | 475-329-5395, taprootct.com

TWO WRASSLIN' CATS

EAST HADDAM

Of all the places I reviewed or wrote about this year, Two Wrasslin' Cats is the most unique, has the most character, is the most unforgettable. From the moment one enters the parking lot, the blue-and-green paint job announces that they do things a little differently. Two 6-foot-tall cats on their hind legs stand guard above the front door. They are tributes to Bruno and Larry, the two cats of proprietor Mark Thiede. The friendly Thiede will be genuinely happy to see you whenever you walk through the door to this sandwich and coffee spot, no matter who you are. | M.L.M. | 860-891-8446, facebook.com/towwrasslincats

openings

A monthly look at some of what's new and exciting on the Connecticut dining scene

Bistro on Main, Manchester We were eager to try this restaurant the moment we saw executive chef Ben Dubow's mouthwatering pics on social media. When we learned about its larger mission, we were even more intrigued. Bistro on Main is owned by the Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC Charities), and in addition to delivering a great experience for guests, it was formed with the goal of "breaking cycles of poverty through transitional employment and work readiness training." It serves as a teaching restaurant for those who graduate from MACC's 12-week culinary program. 860-432-5267, bistro-on-main.com

Knot Norm's Catering Co., Norwalk Opened in July by Jay LeBlanc, Knot Norm's Catering is a brick-and-mortar storefront offering eat-in or take-out lunch and dinner Tuesday through Sunday. The menu, which is broken into two sections — "rolls" and "knot rolls" — features New England seafood favorites such as lobster rolls, roasted oysters and steamed clams. Beyond seafood, there are fried chicken wings, brisket rolls and more. 203-354-3194, knotnorms.com

Jack's Bar + Steakhouse, New Haven The Elm City is filled with great dining options, but of late there's been a void of steakhouses. Restaurateurs and brothers Vladimir and Marco Siguenza aim to change that with this new steakhouse which celebrated its grand opening in November. The brothers are the former owners of the well-known Fairfield County steakhouse Washington Prime, and they hope to duplicate their recipe for steakhouse success in New Haven. 203-891-5777, jacksnewhaven.com

Grano Arso, Chester This new Italian restaurant features handmade pasta, made daily from in-house milled grain that will sometimes be local. The seasonally inspired menu will also feature twists on Italian antipasti classics as well as meat and fish dishes prepared by Joel Gargano. There will also be cocktails and Italian wines. 860-322-3143, granocct.com

Roger Sherman Inn, New Canaan Celebrated chef Francois Kwaku-Dongo was recently brought on to transform the menu

at the Roger Sherman Inn, a New England restaurant and 17-room inn. Previously, Kwaku-Dongo was hired by Wolfgang Puck to work at his famous California restaurants. Kwaku-Dongo ultimately became executive chef at Puck's Spago in West Hollywood. Highlights from one of Kwaku-Dongo's recent menus include house-cured smoked salmon; grilled octopus with chorizo vin, olives and fingerling potatoes; and Woodbridge Farm oxtail ravioli with sun-dried tomato and rosemary jus. 203-966-4541, rogershermaninn.com

Market Place Kitchen & Bar, Newtown The latest Market Place location opened on Nov. 30. The 3,500-square-foot restaurant will feature the same high-end, seasonally inspired American cuisine for which existing locations are known. The Newtown location joins the original in Danbury as well as locations in Woodbury, Avon and at Mount Snow in Vermont. The sleek spot is perfect for a date or couple's night out. 203-491-2993, facebook.com/marketplaceneutown

Beach Donut Shop, Branford The new location from the highly acclaimed Clinton doughnut shop offers the same handmade, preservative-free doughnuts made throughout the day. These doughnuts earned the original shop a spot on multiple "Best in Connecticut" rankings. With glazed, chocolate and jelly options alongside more exotic choices such as the sour cream doughnut and lemon delight, there is plenty to choose from. 203-208-1435, beachdonutshop.com

Something Natural, Greenwich Since the 1970s, the Something Natural sandwich shop has been a fixture of the Nantucket dining scene, attracting a cult following over the years. Now the first off-island location is up and running in Greenwich. Customers can try the sandwiches ranging from roast beef to vegetarian topped with pickles and carrots. They can also enjoy a variety of baked goods including famous cookies and Something Natural's signature house-made Portuguese bread. 203-863-2100, somethingnaturalct.com

5 and Dime Canteen, Newington The team behind the award-winning GoldBurgers has opened a new breakfast



Knot Norm's Catering in Norwalk

spot in Newington. The initial offerings include breakfast and lunch sandwiches and a variety of baked goods. The new spot at 1100 Main St. joins the original GoldBurgers in Newington. 860-665-7848, Instagram: @5anddimect

The Sloppy Waffle, Bloomfield Another Newington favorite, The Sloppy Waffle, has expanded, in this case to Bloomfield. The restaurant's second location offers breakfast and lunch all day. The specialty is, of course, the waffles. These waffles are made from dough and pearl sugar, not pancake batter, and are served warm with powdered sugar and a wide variety of decadent toppings. 860-216-6087, thesloppywaffle.com

*Know of a new Connecticut restaurant?
Email Erik Ofgang at efgang@connecticutmag.com.*

A Tale of Two Breweries

NOD HILL BREWERY AND REDDING BEER CO.
HAVE TURNED ROUTE 7 INTO A BEER DESTINATION

The Greater Danbury area has been something of a brewery desert, seemingly immune to the craft beer revolution taking over the rest of the state and country.

There were breweries on the fringes in places such as Monroe (Veracious Brewing), Kent (Kent Falls) and Oxford (OEC and Black Hog), but none in the immediate vicinity of the Hat City.

That changed in October when both Nod Hill Brewery in Ridgefield and the Redding Beer Co. in Redding opened. Overnight the two breweries have turned the area into a mini beercession destination.

By coincidence the breweries opened at almost the same time, both are owned by father-and-son teams, and they're located just under 2½ miles apart.

That's where the similarities end.

Nod Hill focuses on robust and balanced examples of popular craft beer styles including IPAs and double IPAs with fruit-forward flavors, as well as a variety of Belgian-style beers. Redding Beer Co. focuses on less-hoppy beers that are more malt-forward.

Nod Hill was opened by David Kaye and his father Robert. David is a bluegrass musician and long-time home brewer, and the family owns a fence and driveway gate-installation business called Riverside Fence. For the brewery they brought on professional brewer Kyle Acenowr.

From the outside, Nod Hill looks like your run-of-the-mill industrial brewery. The inside tells a different story. "From the outset, we knew that we wanted our space to be unique, different from the standard concept of a brewery taproom, with something of an old New England feel that's true to our roots," David Kaye says. "We worked with Matt and Sarah Rink, two close friends of mine who own a design/build firm called New Antiquity. Their style incorporates lots of natural wood elements with vintage touches that are playful as well as historical."

The most popular beer at Nod Hill has been Super Mantis, an excellent double IPA. The second-biggest seller has been Ace of Wands, a Trappist-inspired ale. "Going forward, we will be experimenting with a number of

different styles including barrel-aged stouts and, eventually, sour beers, as well as regularly offering cask ale," David Kaye says.

Down the road, Redding Beer Co. was opened by Jim Baulsir with the help of his son Dave. Over the last few years, the two bonded over homebrewing. Jim, an IT manager, began honing his craft studying at the American Brewers Guild in Vermont. He also started thinking about opening a brewery that would offer a different kind of beer. "I'm not a guy who likes super-hoppy beers and I never have been," he says. "I was looking for a demographic that may not have fit into the standard craft-brewery demographic. I felt there was an unsupported market here of people a little bit older from 35 up to 55 who may have been left behind by craft beer."

To that end the brewery offerings include an Irish red ale, an American wheat ale, as well as a laid-back IPA. "We call it an East Coast IPA," Jim Baulsir says. "It has a very strong hop aroma, a very strong hop taste that's balanced out by a strong malt base, but it doesn't have that bitter, back-of-the-throat aftertaste."

Redding Beer Co. is in the heart of downtown Georgetown in the space formerly occupied by the Italian restaurant Aranci 67 (now located in Wilton). The taproom was clearly designed as a hangout.

"We didn't build a brewery and attach a taproom to it," Jim Baulsir says. "What we did was we built a taproom and kind of attached a brewery to it." He credits interior designer Leslie Finch with creating two distinct vibes. One room has an old English pub ambiance, while the other room has a relaxed, almost coffeehouse feel with couches and games.

These two breweries will soon be joined by several more in the area, which David Kaye says will help draw beer lovers from far and wide. "We couldn't be happier that our area in northern Fairfield County is now on the beer map, so to speak. It's great for people coming from a little farther away that they can hit up a couple different spots, and with breweries opening in a few months in Bethel and Danbury, it's only going to get better." | ERIK OFGANG |



Nod Hill Brewery

137 Ethan Allen Hwy. (Route 7), Ridgefield
203-617-1191, nodhillbrewery.com

Redding Beer Co.

7 Main St., Redding
203-587-9000, reddingbeer.com



Nod Hill Brewery in Ridgefield (left) and Redding Beer Co.



Pumped for Pizza

PIZZACO FIRES UP PIES IN FORMER STRATFORD GAS STATION

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

The jury is still out on *why* exactly the monetization of nostalgia in contemporary American culture is so prevalent. But it's everywhere, to be sure. The glory days are on full display at PizzaCo, a new pizza place in Stratford that taps into the design of mid-century American car and road culture. Situated in a resurrected gas station, the design very consciously echoes a time when gas stations were pinnacles of a newly emerging American aesthetic, when going to the gas station was 35 cents a gallon and our social associations were more with the joy of a Sunday drive than the despair of the Monday commute.

This particular spot is yards away from exit 31 on I-95, across from the Two Roads Brewing Co. (which has in recent years become a top destination in this part of Connecticut). The pizza is pretty good, too. It might seem a brave move to open a new pizza place in a region which famously

takes its pizza as serious as southern Connecticut, but co-owners Jordan Bochanis and Declan Mahar are confident in their pies, both in ingredients and preparation. Their distinctive oven, which at 800 degrees cooks pizzas in about two minutes, is built with bricks imported from Italy. "We wanted to stay true to the Neapolitan style, but put a spin on Neapolitan. So we wanted that dome-type oven," Mahar says. They have trademarked the name "garage fired" for their type of pizza. When told that this writer did not understand the term, Mahar says, "Neither do we, but it sounds f----g cool!"

Mahar and Bochanis, who grew up together in the West End of Bridgeport, say their pizza is between Brooklyn and New Haven, obviously geographically but also conceptually. One of their pies is called the scamotz (\$12), which the owners say is a particularly Bridgeport style of pizza,

with a specific type of Italian cheese called "scamorza" from Calabro Cheese Corp. of East Haven. It has a strong, pungent flavor, almost reminiscent of Parmesan. It's definitely one to try for the cheese lovers and pizza connoisseurs out there.

The pizzas are all personal size, with prices ranging from \$12-\$15. There are also seasonal specialties, including a turkey and stuffing pizza around Thanksgiving. Weekends feature brunch pizza, including toppings such as bacon, egg and cheese on the Pedal to the Metal (\$12), and smoked salmon, mascarpone, red onion and capers on the Everything Bagel pizza (\$14). You can also have pizza for dessert. The Lug Nutt includes Nutella, powdered sugar and drizzled chocolate sauce, while the Camp-Fired features melted semi-sweet chocolate, mini marshmallows and crumbled graham crackers. Both pies are \$10.

In addition to the pizzas, a range of salads and a pair of meatball dishes round out the menu. The meatballs come from the family recipe of chef and Italy native Fabio Gallo. Remember how gas stations used to have car service? Well, if you go to Two Roads for a couple of beers, PizzaCo will deliver a pizza straight to your barstool.

The beer goes in the other direction, too, as PizzaCo regularly has as many as 50 different varieties available, most of them microbrews.

PizzaCo

1625 Stratford Ave., Stratford
203-612-7520, pizzacostratford.com

Hours: Tue.-Thu. 4:30-11 p.m., Fri. noon-11:30 p.m., Sat. 11:30 a.m.-11:30 p.m., Sun. 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m.
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Fairfield County

Amba Vilas Palace • Indian Dedicated to creating the finest-quality products by using only the very best ingredients from around the world. • 54 Pembroke Road, Danbury, 203-746-6425 ambavilaspalace.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$

Aranci 67 • Italian • EP Excellent Sorrento-style Italian food made by the former chef at Le Fontane. Menu includes best-in-class pasta dishes. • 142 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, 203-587-1300 aranci67.com. Closed Sun. D, L (Mon.-Fri.), \$\$, WA

Archie Moore's Bar & Restaurant • American • RC Casual pub-style dining with burgers, nachos and salads. And don't miss the award-winning buffalo chicken wings. • 48 Sanford St., Fairfield, 203-256-9295 archiemoores.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$

Artisan • New England A farm-to-table restaurant with New England-inspired seasonal cuisine. • 275 Old Post Road, Southport, 203-259-2800 artisansouthport.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Bailey's Backyard • Farm to Table A farm-to-table restaurant in a polished, relaxed atmosphere. • 23 Bailey Ave., Ridgefield, 203-431-0796 baileysbackyard.com. Closed Mon. L D SB, \$\$\$

Bar Sugo • Italian • EP RC This beloved Italian restaurant bills itself as the place where "modern Italian meets peasant food." That philosophy shines through in its delicious offerings. • 102 Wall St., Norwalk, 203-956-7134 barsugo.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$, WA

Barbarie's Black Angus • American • EP RC Elegant yet cozy atmosphere offering high quality, dry-aged steak on premises, as well as seafood and appetizers paired with an extensive wine list. Expansive brunch, lunch and dinner menu • 5 Eagle St., Danbury, 203-826-7406 beststeakhousedanburyc.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$\$

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • Spanish Mediterranean • EP RC Hip restaurant serving Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine — including tapas, hot and cold. • 4180 Black Rock Tpke., Fairfield, 203-255-0800; 222 Summer St., Stamford, 203-348-4800; 515 West Ave., Norwalk, 203-854-5600 barcelonawinebar.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$\$

bartaco • Mexican Enjoy unique taco recipes and a wide variety of tequilas on the patio at this riverside bar. • 20 Wilton Road, Westport, 203-222-8226 bartaco.com. Open daily. L D, \$, E

Basso Cafe • Mediterranean Casual fine dining establishment offering Mediterranean Latin fusion cuisine in a cozy and chic atmosphere. Bar offers a full wine, beer and craft cocktail list. • 124 New Canaan Ave., Norwalk, 203-354-6566 bassobistrocafe.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.), D, \$\$\$

Bernard's • French Consistently serving perfectly executed seasonal entrées in an elegant country setting. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 20 West Lane, Ridgefield, 203-438-8282 bernardsridgefield.com. Closed Mon. L D SB, \$\$\$, E, WA

The Blind Rhino • American • EP RC Sports bar features a small but diverse and flavorful menu, plus a shuffleboard table and 27 big-screen TVs. • 15 N. Main St., Norwalk, 203-956-7243 theblindrhino.com. Open daily. L (Fri.-Sun.), D, SB, \$

Bloodroot • Vegetarian • EP Offers a seasonal menu that might include Vietnamese summer rolls, the Bloodroot burger and Mexican mole. • 85 Ferris St., Bridgeport, 203-576-9168 bloodroot.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues., Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$, WA

CONNECTICUT Magazine's restaurant listings are presented as a service to our readers. Information on specialties, prices, etc., was supplied by the restaurateurs. Space limitations in this guide prevent us from describing every restaurant in the state; omission is not intended to reflect upon the quality of an establishment. The listings include restaurants we know and love, and those recommended to us by our readers. Average entrée prices are based on dinner entrées: \$ — inexpensive (under \$15); \$\$ — moderate (\$15-\$25); \$\$\$ — expensive (over \$25). This guide is updated regularly, but it is suggested that prices and hours be verified by phone. B (Breakfast); L (Lunch); D (Dinner); LS (Late Supper); SB (Sunday Brunch); E (Live Entertainment); WA (Wheelchair Access); EP = 2018 Experts' Pick; RC = 2018 Readers' Choice.

dining guide | fairfield county

Bodega Taco Bar • Mexican Offers up inventive, doing-their-own-thing fare described as "Modern Mexican with an Urban Beach Vibe." • 1700 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-9590 bodegatacobar.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), SB, \$

Brasitas • Latin Fusion Latin fusion cuisine coupled with tropical decor and authentic Latin American traditions and values. • 954 E. Main St., Stamford, 203-323-3176; 430 Main Ave., Norwalk, 203-354-7329 brasitas.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

Brick + Wood • Pizza/Italian • EP This artisan pizza emporium offers some of the best Napolitano-style pizza in the state. • 1275 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-939-1400 lovelifeandpizza.com. Closed Mon. L, D, \$

Butcher's Best Country Market • Deli • RC Meats are hand-selected, trimmed and cooked, prepared take-home or in your favorite sandwich to go. Traditional and special salads are also available. • 125 S. Main St., Newtown, 203-364-0013 butchersbestmarket.com. Closed Sun. L, \$

Cactus Rose, Wilton • Latin American • EP Fresh, creative fusion of Latin American entrees and hand-crafted margaritas in a vibrant dining area complete with Southwestern decor and outdoor patio. • 5 River Road, Wilton, 203-762-8484 cactusrosewilton.com. Open Daily L D, \$\$, WA

The Capital Grille • Steakhouse • EP RC High-end steakhouse chain offering dry-aged steaks, fresh seafood and world-class wines. Reservations recommended. • 230 Tresser Blvd., Stamford, 203-967-0000 thecapitalgrille.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$\$, WA

Casa Villa • Mexican Robust, authentic Mexican cuisine served in the relaxed atmosphere normally only found south of the Rio Grande. • 182 W. Main St., Stamford, 203-323-1721 casavillarestaurant.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$, WA

Cask Republic • American • EP Serious chef-crafted American fare as well as creative interpretations of globally inspired dishes with an inviting and fun vibe. • 99 Washington St., #2, Norwalk, 203-354-0163; 191 Summer St., Stamford, 203-348-2275 caskrepublic.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Cesco's Trattoria • Italian Chef Aldo Chiamulera's new restaurant is a sophisticated riff on an Old World country villa. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 25 Old Kings Hwy., Darien, 203-202-9985 cescostrattoria.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Char • American Contemporary American restaurant that has a menu that changes seasonally and sources local meats, produce and cheese whenever possible. • 2 South Water St., Greenwich, 203-900-1100 charct.com. Open daily. L (Mon.- Fri.) D, \$\$

Coalhouse Pizza • Pizza • EP Besides coal-fired pizza, the jazz-themed menu also includes wraps, burgers and plates, and an extensive draft selection. • 85 High Ridge Road, Stamford, 203-977-7700 coalhousepizza.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Colony Grill • Pizza • EP This Irish tavern's single menu offering is its one-of-a-kind, thin crust pizza served with a signature "hot oil" topping. • 172 Myrtle Ave., Stamford, 203-359-2184; 1520 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-259-1989; 515 West Ave., Norwalk, 203-866-5252 colonygrill.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Coromandel Cuisine of India • Indian • RC Wide range of tasty Indian fare is served in a small, tastefully done space. • 25-11 Old Kings Hwy. N., Darien, 203-662-1213; 316 South Main St., Newtown, 203-426-7143; 68 Broad St., Stamford, 203-964-1010; 17 Pease Ave., Southport, 203-259-1213 coromandelcuisine.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

The Cottage • New American • EP RC Creative take on American cooking offers a seasonal menu of hand-crafted dishes, inspired by techniques and cultures from various regions around the globe. Reservations recommended. • 256 Post Road E, Westport, 203-557-3701 thecottagewestport.com. Closed Mon. L, D, SB, \$\$\$, WA

Crave • American • RC Dishes like eggplant stack, fish tacos, the Crave 52 Burger, meatball and lobster ravioli are served in an atmosphere that provides a seamless extension from elegant dining into a stylish, attractive bar setting. • 52 Sanford St., Fairfield, 203-292-8080 crave52.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

The Cue • Barbecue • EP Upscale BBQ restaurant with a wide-ranging menu offering traditional and authentic wood fired BBQ dishes, as well as specials, ranging from fresh and locally sourced seafood to homemade pasta to wood-fired steaks. Also serving Sunday brunch. • 2 Pembroke Road, Danbury, 203-207-4669 thecuedanbury.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$

Da Pietro's Restaurant • Italian Chef Pietro Scotti prepares critically acclaimed cuisine. In particular, he's known for his homemade pasta, seafood, meats and game, as well as his signature sauces. • 36 Riverside Ave., Westport, 203-454-1213 dapietros.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.- Fri.) D, \$\$

Dinosaur Bar-B-Que • Barbecue Offers a menu firmly rooted in the traditions of Southern barbecue but with its own distinct character. • 845 Canal St., Stamford, 203-517-3272 dinosaurbarbecue.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Ecco Rooftop Eatery • American • EP Casual and seasonal American cuisine in an airy, light-filled space with a retractable glass roof for al fresco dining. • 8 P T Barnum Square, Bethel, 203-744-7500 eccorooftop.com/. Closed Tues. L D SB, \$\$

Edo II • Asian • EP Korean and Japanese fare served up in a cozy atmosphere. • 32 Padanaram Road, Danbury, 203-743-8799. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.) D, \$\$

El Segundo • Global • EP Small plates of "global strett food" with flavors from places all over the world, in a fun, hip atmosphere. • 3 N Water St., Norwalk, 203-939-9765 elsegundoso.com/. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Elm • American World-class chef Brian Lewis makes culinary magic here — with the freshest local, top-quality ingredients — in an elegant minimalist environment. And there's a great Sunday brunch. • 73 Elm St., New Canaan, 203-920-4994 elmrestaurant.com. Closed Mon. D SB, \$\$\$, WA



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F.I.S.H. • Seafood This mod-elegant restaurant features a variety of excellently prepared seafood favorites and a special section of the menu that lets you choose your fish and how it's cooked. • 245 Bedford St., Stamford, 203-724-9300 fishstamford.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Thurs.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Fat Cat Pie Co. • Pizza • EP A community-based wine-pub featuring small-production wine, craft American beer, thin-crust organic pizza, generous organic salads, artisanal cheese and charcuterie, house-made delectable desserts and a true espresso bar. • 9-11 Wall St., Norwalk, 203-523-0389 fatcatpie.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$, E, WA

The Fez • Moroccan In addition to excellent Moroccan fare—with small plates (kabobs, falafel salad) and large (slow-braised lamb shank, swordfish tagine)—The Fez serves up equally as eclectic live music nightly. • 227 Summer St., Stamford, 203-324-3391 thefez1.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$\$, E

Fin • Japanese Specializes in fresh, imaginative sushi and authentic Japanese cuisine. • 1253 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-255-6788; 219 Main St., Stamford, 203-359-6688 fin-sushi.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$, WA

Flipside Burgers & Bar • American Flipside features creative burgers, appetizers, salads & cocktails. Happy Hour Monday-Saturday 3-6pm in the bar featuring 1/2 priced drinks & \$3 small plates. • 1125 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-8233 flipsiderestaurant.com. Kitchen open daily. L D, \$\$\$

Fortina • Italian Enjoy the award-winning Luigi Bianco pizza, cooked in wood-fire ovens, on the rooftop dining area. • 120 Washington Blvd., Stamford, 203-703-9080 fortinapizza.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, SB, \$\$\$

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 238 Commerce Drive, Fairfield, 203-333-7373; 59 Federal Road, Danbury, 203-790-7373 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Gabriele's Italian Steakhouse • Italian Gabriele's is large and luxe, and so are the steaks, which include filet mignon served on the bone, Wagyu and bone-in porterhouse. • 35 Church St., Greenwich, 203-622-4223 gabrielesofgreenwich.com. Open daily. D, \$\$\$

Geronimo Tequila Bar & Southwest Grill • Southwestern Fusion • EP Mix of traditional Native American, Mexican, Spanish and Anglo-American fare, with bold flavors and authentic ingredients. • 2070 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-955-1643 geronimobarandgrill.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$

Harlan Publick • American Blend of restaurant, tap room and patio in the heart of downtown SoNo. • 127 Washington St., Norwalk, 203-831-0727 harlanpublick.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D SB, \$\$\$

The Hideaway • Pub Seafood apps, Southwestern specialties and a bar with an extensive beer selection and late-night pub menu, plus trivia on Wednesdays and live music every weekend. • 30 Grove St., Ridgefield, 203-438-7676 thehideawayridgefield.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, E

Homestead Inn — Thomas Henkelmann • French Upscale French restaurant features impeccable service, comfortable surroundings, an extensive wine list and creative French food. • 420 Field Point Road, Greenwich, 203-869-7500 homesteadinn.com/thomas-henkelmann. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$\$

Hoodoo Brown BBQ • American • EP RC This laid-back barbecue bar and restaurant features a delicious blend of Texas, Kansas City, Carolina and other styles that will leave you craving more. • 967 Ethan Allen Hwy., Ridgefield, 203-438-6033 hoodoobrownbbq.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

Ibiza Tapas Danbury • Tapas Surround yourself with the sights, sounds, flavors and scents of Spain, with both hot and cold as well as traditional and modern tapas. • 93 Mill Plain Road, Danbury, 203-616-5731 ibiza-tapas.com. Closed Mon. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$, WA

Ichiro • Sushi Ichiro offers a combination of Asian fusion, sushi and hibachi entrees. Enjoy the full-service bar and the shows put on by the hibachi chef. • 69 Newtown Road, Danbury, 203-792-8881 ichirodanbury.com. Open daily. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$\$

India • Indian • EP Fun, locally sourced, Farm-to-Table Restaurant featuring traditional Indian cuisine and bright new dishes with British Colonial overtones. • 62 Main St., New Canaan, 203-972-8332 indianewcanaan.com. Open daily. D LS, \$\$\$

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dining guide | fairfield county

Jesup Hall • American • EP Diverse and ingredient driven, the menu is constantly changing and the food is difficult to label but consistently intriguing. • 90 Post Road E., Westport, 203-557-6198 jesuphallwestport.com. Closed Sun. & Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

Joseph's Steakhouse • American • EP Known for a New York-style steakhouse experience with gems such as prime dry-aged beef. • 360 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-337-9944 josephssteakhouse.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Kawa Ni • Asian • EP RC A creative interpretation of pan-Asian cuisine and culture, styled after a Japanese pub and using locally grown ingredients. • 19A Bridge Square, Westport, 203-557-8775 kawaninwestport.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.) D LS (Tues.-Sat.), \$\$\$

King's • American • EP Breakfast and lunch served up in a cozy, rustic atmosphere. • 265 S Main St., Newtown, 203-426-6881. Open daily. B L, \$

Kolam • Indian • EP RC Offers up a wide variety of regional Indian cuisines. • 316 S Main St., Newtown, 203-426-7143 kolamrestaurant.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

Kotobuki Japanese Cuisine • Sushi • RC Rated "one of the best sushi restaurants" by Zagat for the past two decades, Kotobuki offers high-quality, classically prepared and authentic Japanese food. • 457 Summer St., Stamford, 203-359-4747 kotobukijapaneserestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, \$

l'escalier • French • EP A stylish, romantic dining room overlooking Greenwich Harbor that serves superb Provençal cuisine. • 500 Steamboat Road, Delamar Greenwich Harbor, Greenwich, 203-661-4600 lescalierrestaurant.com. Open daily. B L D LS SB, \$, WA

Le Fat Poodle • French • EP Enjoy Southern, Latin, and globally flavored French cuisine in an upscale dining room or on the 30-seat outdoor patio. • 20 Arcadia Road, Old Greenwich, 203-717-1515 lefatpoodle.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$, WA

Liana's Trattoria • Italian Traditional Italian cuisine served in the atmosphere of an authentic Italian bistro. • 591 Tunxis Hill Road, Fairfield, 203-368-1235. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

Little Barn • Pub Burgers, tacos and farm-fresh salads, served up in a casual atmosphere with an outdoor patio and fireplace. • 1050 Post Road E., Westport, 203-557-8501 littlebarnct.com. Open daily. L D, \$, E

Little Goose Café • Gastropub • EP Gastropub offering a rarified culinary experience combining indigenous local and American ingredients in a cozy atmosphere. • 397 Commerce Drive, Fairfield, 203-296-9789 littlegoosefairfield.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$, WA

Little Pub • American Great food, generous drinks, seasonal menus and a lively pub atmosphere where you'll feel right at home. • 59 Ethan Allen Hwy., Ridgefield, 203-544-9222 littlepub.com. Open daily. L D, \$

Local Kitchen and Bar • American Craft beer is the name of the game here with more than 30 lines including rare local, national and international gems. There is also a full menu of classic American cuisine. • 68 Washington St., Norwalk, 203-957-3352; 85 Mill Plain Road, Fairfield, 203-955-1919 sonolocal.com, fairfieldlocal.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$, WA

Luc's Cafe • French • EP An authentic French bistro offering non-stop service from 11 a.m. on, with terrace dining available in the warmer months. • 3 Big Shop Lane, Ridgefield, 203-894-8522 lucscfe.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$\$\$, E

Market Place Kitchen & Bar • American Featuring American farm-to-table cuisine with a locally sourced menu. • 33 Mill Plain Road, Danbury, 203-616-5836 marketplacedanbury.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Match • American • EP The farm-fresh, seasonal menu at this upscale SONO restaurant changes daily but always offers something intriguing. • 98 Washington St., South Norwalk, 203-852-1088 matchsono.com. Open daily. D L (Wed.-Fri.), \$\$\$

Max 40 Steakhouse and Fish • American Upscale dining experience featuring the area's only 40-day Prime aged beef along with fresh seafood and raw bar. • 40 Millplain Road, Danbury, 203-826-7406 max40ct.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$\$

Mecha Noodle Bar • Asian • RC Serves some of Asia's most comforting dishes, from Vietnamese pho to Japanese ramen and riffs on food that can be found in the streets of Southeast Asia. • 116 Washington St., South Norwalk, 203-295-8718; 1215 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-8222 mechanoodlebar.com. Open daily. L D, \$

Mexicali Rose • Mexican • EP Authentic Mexican food that reflects the rustic tastes of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and freshness of the ingredients. • 71 S Main St. #1, Newtown, 203-270-7003 mexicalirosenewtown.com/. Closed Mon. L D, \$, WA

Mezon • Mexican • RC An inventive fusion of Spanish, Latin American, and Caribbean-inspired dishes to transport you to a time of tradition, passion, flavor and soul. • 56 Mill Plain Road, Danbury, 203-748-0875 mezonct.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$

Milano Wine Bar & Pizzeria • Italian Unique pizza offerings such as the peaches and bacon pie and an extensive cocktail selection. • 281 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-275-8561 milanowinebar.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Mill Street Bar & Table • American • EP Seasonally driven menu from the Northeast land and sea, with two dining rooms, an oyster bar, a full-service bar, comfy cocktail lounge and heated patio. • 230 Mill St., Greenwich, 203-813-3323 millstreetct.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, \$\$\$

New Wok • Chinese • RC Chinese dishes such as Fisherman's Casserole and Crispy Walnut Shrimp & Chicken draw inspiration from Szechuan, Hunan, Malaysian, and Thai cuisine. • 228 S Main St # D16, Newtown, CT 06470, 203-270-3738 newwokrestaurant.weebly.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

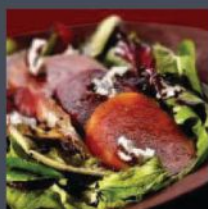
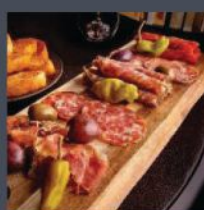
Nom-eez • Vietnamese • EP Traditional Vietnamese cuisine and street food made from fresh, clean-tasting ingredients prepared with playful, sometimes quirky creativity. • 2992 Fairfield Ave, Bridgeport, 203-923-8686 nom-eez.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$, WA

Nostrano Italian Eatery • Italian • RC Authentic Italian food in a comfortable atmosphere. Dine-in (BYOB) or carryout. • 179 Main St., Monroe, 203-880-5456 nostranoeatery.com. Closed Mon. L, D, \$\$\$, WA

Note Kitchen & Bar • American Modern American cuisine fused with international influences and paired with wines, craft beers, artisan cocktails, and soulful music. Menu changes frequently based on seasons and availability of ingredients. • 227 Greenwood Ave, Bethel, 203-917-3411 notekitchen.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.), D (Mon.-Sat.), SB, \$\$, E, WA



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dining guide | fairfield county

Nouveau Monde Wine Bar & Bistro • American • EP RC

This stylish bistro serves elevated American comfort food with an elegant ambiance. Seasonal entrées are served with a wine list of over 40 wines by the glass and 130 by the bottle, along with a curated craft beer, spirits, port and sherries list. Brunch served on Sundays. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 6 Washington Ave, Sandy Hook, 203-491-2723 nouveau Monde Wine Bar.com. Open daily. D, SB, \$\$, WA

Paci • Italian Exceptional Italian cuisine which redefines classic dishes while creating new ones using the highest quality of fresh organic ingredients. • 96 Station St., Southport, 203-259-9600 pacirestaurant.com. Closed Sun. & Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

Parallel Post • Farm to Table Seasonally inspired menu features local ingredients prepared with contemporary, healthy techniques. Located at the Trumbull Marriott. • 180 Hawley Lane, Trumbull, 203-380-6380 parallelpostrestaurant.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP RC The original home of New Haven-style thin-crust pizza, cooked in a coal-fired brick oven which is carefully replicated in Pepe's satellite locations. • 238 Commerce Drive, Fairfield, 203-333-7373; 59 Federal Road, Danbury, 203-790-7373 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

Pho Saigon • Vietnamese The unpretentious, out-of-the-way gem serves up generous portions of authentic, traditional pho. • 1275 Iranistan Ave., Bridgeport, 203-334-8812. Open daily. L D, \$

Pho Vietnam • Vietnamese • RC A family-owned restaurant serving authentic Vietnamese food with fresh produce, choice meats and seafood. • 56 Padanaram Road, Danbury, 203-743-6049 phovietnamrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Pink Sumo • Sushi • RC Specializes in world-class sushi and sashimi, using only the freshest seafood and ingredients. • 4 Church Lane, Westport, 203-557-8080 pinksumo.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

PizzaCo • Pizza • EP This converted gas station offers up personal-sized specialty pizzas ranging from traditional to brunch and dessert pies. • 1625 Stratford Ave., Stratford, 203-612-7520 pizzacostratford.com. Closed Mon. L D LS, \$, WA

Positano Ristorante • Italian This restaurant has been owned and operated by the Scarpato family for more than 15 years. Owner and chef Giuseppe Scarpato was born on the island of Ponza, Italy, and his cuisine focuses on all-natural cooking, with fresh fishes, meats, fruits, vegetables, and aromatic herbs. • 27 Powers Court, Westport, 203-454-4922 positanosrestaurantwestport.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$, E

Prime • Steak • EP Classic favorites in this striking décor include raw bar, mizu sushi, USDA prime steaks and chops, surf & turf and hand-made desserts, plus a 750+ label wine list • 78 Southfield Ave, Stamford, 203-817-0700 restaurantprime.com/stamford. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, \$\$\$

Red Rooster Pub • American • RC American comfort food and family fare such as steaks, burgers, pizza, chops, ribs and much more, served in a rustic decor atmosphere. • 160 S. Main St., Newtown, 203-270-0788 redroosterpubnewtown.com. Open daily. L, D, \$\$

Rizzuto's • Italian A warm urban environment with a rustic Italian menu. Offerings include an extensive antipasti selection, creative small plates, house-made pasta and wood-fired Neapolitan pizza. • 6 Stony Hill Road, Bethel, 203-790-4444; 540 Riverside Ave., Westport, 203-221-1002 rizzutos.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$\$

Roberto's • Italian Excellent Italian food with attentive service, plus catering and a full-service banquet facility. • 505 Main St., Monroe, 203-268-5723 robertosmonroe.com. Open daily. L (Sun.), D, \$\$\$

Rothbard Ale + Larder • Gastropub Offers dishes and drinks inspired by the Central European regions, including Alsace, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. • 90 Post Road E., Westport, 203-557-9666 rothbardct.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. L (Fri.-Sun.), D, \$

Sal e Pepe Contemporary Italian Bistro • Northern Italian • RC Offers superb cuisine with a contemporary flair, from fresh pastas and sauces to unique specials and classics with a modern twist. • 97 South Main St., Newtown, 203-426-0805 salepeperestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA



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The Schoolhouse at Cannondale •

American • EP With the motto "Fine. Fresh. Simple," the owners seek out the best sources of ingredients and treat them simply and with respect. • 34 Cannon Road, Wilton, 203-834-9816 schoolhouseatcannondale.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri., Sat.) D (Wed., Fri., Sat.) SB, \$\$\$

Shiki Hana • Sushi This low-key restaurant offers a variety of sushi rolls, hibachi dishes and Japanese bento meals. • 222 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-259-5950 shikihanafairfield.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

The Sitting Duck Tavern • American Neighborhood tavern committed to using regionally and locally grown produce and products. • 3694 Main St., Stratford, 203-873-0871 sittingducktavern.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$\$\$

South End • American South End's food philosophy is a simple one; uncomplicated, seasonal, flavorful food, with an atmosphere that is casual. • 36 Pine St., New Canaan, 203-966-5200 southendnewcanan.com. Open daily. L (Wed.-Sat.), D SB, \$\$\$, E

The Spinning Wheel • American • RC Enjoy a quintessentially New England-inspired menu with seasonal specials, local and homegrown accents, and modern adaptations of traditional comfort dishes. This classic style pub has 12 types of beer on tap, a rum-inspired drink menu and is housed within a newly renovated historic saltbox style house that dates back to 1742. • 109 Black Rock Tpke., Redding, 203-664-4000 swredding.com. Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$, WA

The Spread • American • EP The owners are industry leaders in culinary deviance and solutions, and are focused on delivering great dining experiences. • 70 N Main St., Norwalk, 203-939-1111 thespreadsono.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$\$

Stanzio's • Pizza Wood-fired pizza made using organic, seasonal ingredients from local farms and artisans. • 35 Lake Ave. Ext., Danbury, 203-885-1057 stanzios.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, \$, WA

Taproot • New American • EP Open and roomy space where lots of different inspirations come together in excellent dishes that are influenced by what products are in season. • 269 Greenwood Ave., Bethel, 475-329-5395 taprootct.com. Closed Sun. & Mon. D, \$, WA

Tazza Osteria & Bar • Italian Try favorites like grilled octopus, hanger steak, meatballs and brick oven pizza in a modern and trendy atmosphere. • 116 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-8810 tazzaosteriabar.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

Tequila Mockingbird • Mexican The food here is made with traditional ingredients when possible, including imported chiles. Tequila is taken seriously as well, with bartenders receiving tequila training in Mexico. • 6 Forest St., New Canaan, 203-966-2222 tequilamockingbirdnc.com. Open daily. D, \$\$\$

TerraSole • Italian This cheese and wine bar features authentic Italian cuisine, with locally grown and, whenever possible, organic produce, fish and meat as well as a 200-plus bottle wine list. • 3 Big Shop Lane., Ridgefield, 203-438-5352 terrasoleridgefield.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

Thai Delight • Thai • RC Traditionally prepared Thai offerings such as Thai Mango Chicken, Wild Boar Basil and Mango Fish Curry. • 133 Mt Pleasant Rd, Newtown, 203-426-0674 thaidelightnewtown.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, \$, WA

Thai Spice, Norwalk • Thai • RC Traditional Thai recipes including Pad Thai, Big Bowl Soup, Summer Shrimp Rolls and Papaya Salad. • 345 Main Ave, Norwalk, 203-846-3533 thaispicenorwalk.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

Toro • Sushi • EP RC Open sushi bar, plus Japanese, Chinese and hibachi menu in a modern Asian decorated atmosphere. • 28 Churchill Road, Newtown, 203-364-0099 bestasianfoodnewtown.com. Open daily. L, D, \$\$\$

Uberti's Fish Market • Seafood Specialties include fish-and-chips, stuffed scallops, lobster rolls and deep-fried lobster at this seafood market. • 88 Ferry Blvd., Stratford, 203-377-1429. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Valencia Luncheria • Latin American • EP Venezuelan cuisine served up in large portions in a bright, relaxed atmosphere. • 164 Main St., Norwalk, 203-846-8009 valencialuncheria.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$\$

Wafu Asian Bistro • Asian Upscale dining with a frequently changing menu that utilizes local ingredients. • 3671 Post Road, Southport, 203-254-2288 wafuasianbistro.com. Open daily. L D, \$



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dining guide | fairfield county

Walrus + Carpenter • Barbecue • EP Sink your teeth into the barbecue offered at this sleek eatery in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport. The customer favorite is the Notorious P.I.G. • 2895 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-333-2733 walruscarpenterct.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Washington Prime • American • EP RC The land and sea menu has elements of Americana with cross-cultural influences. The restaurant also boasts an impressive beverage program. • 141 Washington St., South Norwalk, 203-857-1314 washingtonprimect.com. Open daily. L (Wed.-Sun.) D, \$\$, WA

The Whelk • Seafood • EP Upmarket, sophisticated seafood with a distinct culinary voice. • 575 Riverside Ave., Westport, 203-557-0902 thewhelkwestport.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Thurs.), D, \$\$\$

Hartford County

2 Hopewell Bistro & Bar • New American • EP This upscale bistro serves all natural meats, cut and portioned daily on premise, and fresh ocean seafood in a sophisticated yet casual atmosphere. Reservations recommended. • 2 Hopewell Road, South Glastonbury, 860-633-9600 2hopewell.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$\$, E

Abigail's Grille and Wine Bar • American Completely remodeled 1780 tavern blending classic charm with upscale casual dining. Try Gorgonzola-topped pork chops or cedar-plank Atlantic salmon. • 4 Hartford Road, Simsbury, 860-264-1580 abigailsgrill.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, \$\$, WA

Artisanal Burger Company • American Gourmet burgers are the specialty here, but they are only the beginning of the culinary delights diners will experience. • 1436 Pleasant Valley Road, Manchester, 860-644-0046 artisanalburgercompany.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

@ the Barn • American This 170-seat, 4,000-square-foot ultra-sleek steakhouse and wine bar features multiple dining areas, steaks, seafood, small plates and a wine list selected by a certified sommelier, as well as a wide array of martinis, specialty cocktails and craft beers. • 17R E. Granby Road, Granby, 860-413-3888 atthebarngranby.com. Closed Mon. L D (Tues.-Sun.), \$\$, WA

Àvert Brasserie • French • EP Owned by two chefs who in recent years have been making the Connecticut foodie world sit up and take notice, this restaurant offers beautiful food combined with imagination, perfectionism and zest. • 35 LaSalle Road, West Hartford, 860-904-6240 avertbrasserie.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • Spanish Mediterranean • EP RC Hip restaurant serving Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine — including tapas, hot and cold. • 971 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-218-2100 barcelonawinebar.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, \$\$, E, WA

Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue • Barbecue • EP Let your inner bear roar at these finger-lickin' good Kansas City-style barbecue joints owned by competitive eating champion Jamie McDonald. • 89 Arch St., Hartford, 860-724-3100; 2152 Poquonock Ave., Windsor, 860-999-3834 bearsbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Bricco Trattoria • Italian Creates the feel of an Italian farm house or vineyard home, with simple, fresh and delicious food and time-honored recipes. • 124 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, 860-659-0220 billygrant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

Butchers & Bakers • American • EP Farm-fresh food, house-made desserts and amenities like an outdoor terrace for summer help this place set a new bar for culinary creations, hobnobbing and beyond. • 270 Farmington Ave., Suite 101, Farmington, 860-470-7414 butchersandbakers.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

The Capital Grille • Steakhouse • EP RC High-end steakhouse chain offering dry-aged steaks, fresh seafood and world-class wines. Reservations recommended. • 44 Front St., Hartford, 860-244-0075 thecapitalgrille.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$\$, WA

Carbone's Kitchen • Italian Established in 2012, this casual-dining little brother to Carbone's Ristorante uses fresh and local ingredients to prepare old-school Italian classics. • 6 Wintonbury Mall, Bloomfield, 860-904-2111 carboneskitchen.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, WA

Carbone's Ristorante • Italian This old-school, fine-dining Italian restaurant was established in 1938 and has survived as long as it has for a reason. Dishes include lobster risotto, grilled veal chop and eggplant, chicken and veal parmigiano. • 588 Franklin Ave., Hartford, 860-296-9646 carbonesct.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Cavey's Restaurant • Italian / French • EP Choose from handmade pasta and house-cured salami in the Northern Italian restaurant upstairs, or soufflé and buttery foie gras in the luxurious French restaurant downstairs. Enjoy a cocktail with some light jazz in a casual lounge while you decide. • 45 E. Center St., Manchester, 860-463-2751 caveysrestaurant.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$, E, WA

The Cook & The Bear • Barbecue • EP High-end barbecue made with locally sourced ingredients, plus vegetarian and gluten-free options, in a hip, sleek, modern space. • 50 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-595-3345 thecookandthebear.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

The Corner Pug • Irish Pub Classic favorites at this pug-themed pub include shepherd's pie, hot grilled Reubens, creamy chicken pot pies with flaky crusts, and authentic English fish and chips. • 1046 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, 860-231-0241 cornerpug.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$

Costa del Sol • Spanish/Mediterranean • EP Galician restaurateur Jose "Pepe" Feijoo incorporates the old and the new, breathing new life into a cuisine rich in Spanish heritage, with a focus on tapas and seafood. Tapas bar, sun rooms, patio, private function room and a small market. • 901 Wethersfield Ave., Hartford, 860-296-1714 costadelsolhartford.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$

Cottage Restaurant & Cafe • American Family-owned, European-style restaurant offers unique, seasonally inspired dishes and a wide selection of wines, martinis and cocktails. • 427 Farmington Ave., Plainville, 860-793-8888 cottagerestaurantandcafe.com. Closed Sun. & Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$

East Side Restaurant • German Old World-style restaurant specializing in German food, beer and culture in an authentic Bavarian atmosphere. • 131 Dwight St., New Britain, 860-223-1188 eastsiderestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

Feng Asian Bistro • Asian Features a broad range of elegant Southeast Asian dishes spanning the Pacific Rim, with a fusion of East and West in every plate. • 93 Asylum St., Hartford, 860-549-3364 fengrestaurant.com/feng-hartford. Closed Sun. L D LS, \$\$\$

Firebox • New American Firebox boasts a seasonal, Connecticut farm-inspired menu including seared Stonington scallops and Connecticut farm-raised lamb. • 539 Broad St., Hartford, 860-246-1222 fireboxrestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, E, WA

First & Last Tavern • Italian Offers authentic Italian cuisine such as salads, pastas and brick-oven pizzas in a casual atmosphere. • 939 Maple Ave., Hartford, 860-956-6000; (bakery cafe) 920 Maple Ave., Hartford, 860-956-7000; 26 West Main St., Avon, 860-626-2000; 32 Cooke St., Plainville, 860-747-9100 firstandlasttavern.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar • American Premier destination for prime meats and chops, fresh fish and poultry, with a sophisticated wine list. • Blue Back Square, 44 South Main St., West Hartford, 860-676-7100 flemingssteakhouse.com. Open daily. D, \$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, any pie here is worth the wait. • 1148 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-7373; 221 Buckland Hills Drive, Manchester, 860-644-7333 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$, WA

Great Taste • Chinese • EP Multiregional Chinese cuisine in a space suitable for intimate gathering, family get-togethers or large-scale celebrations. • 597 W Main St., New Britain, CT 06053, 860-827-8988 [https://greattaste.com/](http://greattaste.com/). Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

GoldBurgers • Burgers • EP The big (with a capital B) juicy specialties at GoldBurgers are all made with locally sourced beef and include the venue's namesake, the GoldBurger, a monster of a burger made with two patties and crowned by potato chips. • 1096 Main St., Newington, 860-665-0478. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

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India • Indian • EP Fun, locally sourced, Farm-to-Table Restaurant featuring traditional Indian cuisine and bright new dishes with British Colonial overtones • 54 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-726-4103 indiawesthartford.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

J. Gilbert's • Steak Quality ingredients and honest food, like prime wood-fired steaks and seafood, in a luxe, yet warm, atmosphere. • 185 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, 860-659-0409 jgilberts.com. Open daily. D, \$\$\$

J. Timothy's Tavern • Gastropub • EP RC This historic pub offers up casual fare such as the famous "dirt wings," prime rib, chicken pot pie, tater tot poutine and French onion soup. • 143 New Britain Ave., Plainville, 860-747-6813 jtimothys.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

JV's Taproom • Pizza / Bar • EP Bar/pub spotlights steak and wood-fired pizza along with craft beers and specialty cocktails in a casual setting. Rebel Dog Coffee Co., located in the same building, serves up specialty coffees and breakfast sandwiches. • 393 Farmington Ave., Plainville, 860-793-8809 jvstaproom.com. Closed Mon. D, SB, \$, WA

Max Downtown • American Features global cuisine, chophouse classics, a fine wine list and lighter fare in the tavern. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 185 Asylum St., Hartford, 860-522-2530 maxrestaurantgroup.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$\$, WA

Max Fish • Seafood Lively, upscale fish house serving a daily selection of fresh seafood and great steaks. The Shark Bar is more casual, offering lighter fare and Max classics in an up-tempo environment. • 110 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, 860-652-3474 maxfishct.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, \$\$

Max's Oyster Bar • Seafood • RC Modern renditions of classic American seafood in an atmosphere reminiscent of a big-city oyster bar. • 964 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-6299 maxrestaurantgroup.com/oyster. Open daily. L, D, LS (Sat.), \$\$\$

Metro Bis • American It has a lovely new home at Simsbury 1820 House, but the focus hasn't changed — classically grounded innovation, seasonally oriented and ever open to a playful riff or two. • 731 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury, 860-651-1908 metrobis.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$\$, WA

The Mill on the River • American Pan-seared Chilean sea bass and pork chop Milanese are tops at this former gristmill. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 989 Ellington Road, South Windsor, 860-289-7929 themillontheriver.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, \$\$, WA

Millwright's Restaurant and Tavern • American • EP Tyler Anderson dazzled us for years at The Copper Beech Inn. Now, he's wowing all comers at this sparkling restaurant. • 77 West St., Simsbury, 860-651-5500 millwrightsrestaurant.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$\$, WA

Monte Alban • Mexican Low-key spot for Mexican staples like tacos, burritos and enchiladas, plus breakfast and outdoor tables. • 531 Farmington Ave., Hartford, 860-523-7243 montealbanhartford.com. Open daily. B L D SB, \$

Nat's BBQ • Barbecue A unique variety of Southern and other regional American barbecue styles and craft beers in a comfortable, low-key atmosphere. • 144B Broad St., Windsor, 860-298-8955 natsrealbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$

ON20 • Contemporary French / American • EP RC Savor panoramic city views and sophisticated atmosphere along with sumptuous seasonal cuisine. • 400 Columbus Blvd., 20th Floor, Hartford, 860-722-5161 ontwenty.com. L (Mon.-Fri.) D (Wed.-Sat.) L D, \$\$\$, E

Park & Oak • American American cuisine with a Southern bent in a comfortable, family-friendly eatery. • 14 Oakwood Ave., West Hartford, 860-310-2099 parkandoakrestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Mon-Sat), D, \$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP RC The original home of New Haven-style thin-crust pizza, cooked in a coal-fired brick oven which is carefully replicated in Pepe's satellite locations. • 221 Buckland Hills Drive, Manchester, 860-644-7333; 1148 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-7373 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

Pho 501 • Vietnamese • EP Dedicated to keeping it simple, with the best soups and authentic Vietnamese family recipes. • 501 Main St., East Hartford, 860-569-3700 pho.com/east-hartford-ct/pho-501. Closed Mon. L D, \$



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| dining guide | hartford county

Plan B Burger Bar • Burgers Gourmet burgers and a wide selection of beers and bourbons. • 120 Hebron Ave. #6, Glastonbury, 860-430-9737 planbburger.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Present Company • American • EP Seasonal menus using fresh local ingredients and prepared in a unique open-kitchen atmosphere. Five-course chef's tasting menu available nightly. Catering and private events available. • 2 Tunxis Road, Tariffville, 860-658-7890 presentcompanyct.com. Closed Sun. D, \$\$\$, WA

Republic at the Linden • Gastropub • EP Handcrafted beers, boutique wines and small-batch bourbons are offered at this high-end pub. • 39 Jerome Ave., Bloomfield, 860-216-5852 republicct.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$

Restaurant Bricco • Italian • EP Every dish is crafted from scratch, holding true to the essentials of Sunday dinner. • 78 Lasalle Road, West Hartford, 860-233-0220 billygrant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

Rizzuto's • Italian A warm urban environment with a rustic Italian menu. Offerings include an extensive antipasti selection, creative small plates, house-made pasta and wood-fired Neapolitan pizza. • 111 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-232-5000 rizzutos.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$\$

Rooster Co. • American • EP Rotisserie chickens made to perfection are the heart and soul of menu here. • 1076 Main St., Newington, 860-757-3969 roostercompany.net. Open daily L D, \$\$, WA

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse • Steak Billed as "the steak that speaks for itself" the steaks served here are USDA Prime. In addition, the restaurant utilizes locally sourced produce in its recipes. • 2513 Berlin Tpk., Newington, 860-666-2202 ruthschris.com. Open daily. L (Sun.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Savoy Pizzeria and Craft Bar • Pizza • RC Pizza made with artisanal dough and baked in 900 degree wood-fired ovens can be paired with select wines for a true Neapolitan experience. • 32 LaSalle Road, West Hartford, 860-969-1000 maxrestaurantgroup.com/savoy. Open daily. L, D, LS, \$, WA

Sayulita • Mexican • EP Named for a Mexican fishing village, this restaurant has a party vibe and uses top-of-the-line ingredients. Specialties include a variety of tacos and Ceviche de Playa. • 865 Main St., Glastonbury, 860-430-9941 cintinasayulita.com. Open daily. D, L (Sat.-Sun.), \$\$, WA

Shady Glen • American A dairy bar/restaurant known for cheeseburgers and ice cream. • 840 Middle Tpk. E., Manchester, 860-649-4245; 360 Middle Tpk. W., Manchester, 860-643-0511. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Smokin' with Chris • Barbecue • EP Specializes in barbecue and other smoked meats, but also offers specialty salads, seafood and vegetarian dishes. • 59 W Center St., Southington, 860-620-9133 smokinwithchris.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$, E

Sorella • Italian A new kid on the block from restaurant pros Billy Carbone and Dan Keller, who own Dish across the street. • 901 Main St., Hartford, 860-244-9084 sorellahartford.com. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

Staropolska • Polish Authentic homemade Polish cuisine prepared fresh daily and an in-house bar. • 252 Broad St., New Britain, 860-612-1711 staropolska.net. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$

Sushi Red • Sushi • EP Offers up delicious, fresh, hand-crafted sushi in a quiet, intimate setting. • 450 East St., Plainville, 860-410-1829. Closed Sun. L D, \$

The Tavern at Keney Park • American Stop in for a quick burger or dine on entrées like the Steak BOMB, Sweet Tea Chicken or bean and Asian noodle salad. • 171 Windsor Ave., Windsor, 860-757-0658 tavernkp.com. Open daily. B (Sat. & Sun.) L D, \$\$, WA

Tisane Euro-Asian Café • Asian Fusion The diverse menu is complemented by more than 40 specialty martinis and other specialty drinks. Try the Far East nachos, wings trio, Tisane Cobb salad, noodle bowls and espresso steak. • 537 Farmington Ave., Hartford, 860-523-5417 mytisane.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$, E, WA

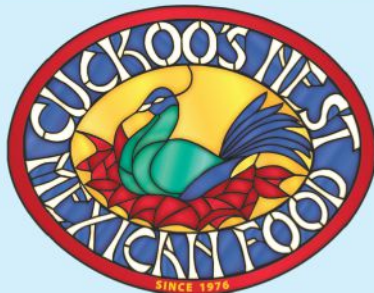
Treva • Italian • EP Cuisine is inspired from central and upper Italy, with seasonal varieties and unique nightly specials. • 980 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-232-0407 trevac.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$

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dining guide | hartford county

Trumbull Kitchen • American “Global comfort food” is served at communal tables at this sophisticated city brasserie. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 150 Trumbull St., Hartford, 860-493-7417 maxrestaurantgroup.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, \$\$, E

Vinted Wine Bar & Kitchen • Tapas This exciting restaurant in Blue Back Square serves 68 wines by the glass along with an ambitious small-plates menu. • 63 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-206-4648 vintedwinebar.com. Open daily. D, \$\$, WA

The Willows • American A suave boîte in the DoubleTree Hotel helmed by star chef Leo Bushey III. On the menu: vanilla-poached lobster, pot-au-feu and pork tenderloin roulade with sun-dried fruit. • 42 Century Drive, Bristol, 860-589-7766 doubletree-bristol.com. Open daily 5 to 10. D, \$\$\$, WA

Wood-n-Tap • American Hip, fun eateries known for great burgers and great beer. You'll also love the pizza, pasta, salads, nachos and sandwiches. • 99 Sisson Ave., Hartford, 860-232-TAPS; 1274 Farmington Ave., Farmington, 860-773-OPEN; 420 Queen St., Southington, 860-329-0032; 12 Town Line Road, Rocky Hill, 860-571-9444; 3375 Berlin Tpke., Newington, 860-594-8808 woodntap.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Litchfield County

@ the Corner • New American • EP Café, pub and restaurant with wide section of craft beers and offering entrees like Bistro Steak and Seafood Risotto. Reservations available. • 3 West St., Litchfield, 860-567-8882 atthecorner.com/. Open daily. L, D, \$\$, WA, E

Alpenhaus Restaurant and Steinbock Tavern • German Restaurant offers authentically prepared German food such as pan fried chicken schnitzel and Bavarian suerbraten; downstairs tavern has the atmosphere of a Bavarian-style beer hall. • 59 Banks St., New Milford, 860-799-5557 alpenhausct.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri.-Sun.), D, SB, \$\$, WA (restaurant)

Arethusa al Tavolo • New American • EP This high-flying, country restaurant serves sparkling dishes like butter-poached halibut with crab paella, rack of lamb and a glorious reinvention of Peking duck. • 828 Bantam Road, Bantam, 860-567-0043 arethusaaltavolo.com. Open Thurs.-Sun. D, \$\$\$, WA

Backstage • American Enjoy casual American fare prepared from scratch — salads and soups, creative small plates, hand-formed Angus patties on house-baked rolls — and 40 beers on tap. • 84 Main St., Torrington, 860-489-8900 backstageatdrinklive.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$, E, WA

Carole Peck's Good News Cafe • New American Chef Carole Peck offers original dishes like warm crab taco and chicken tagine. • 694 Main St. S., Woodbury, 203-266-GOOD good-news-cafe.com. Closed Tues. L D, \$\$

The Cookhouse • Barbecue “Slo-smoked” baby-back ribs and pulled pork are the name of the game here. • 31 Danbury Road (Route 7), New Milford, 860-355-4111 thecookhouse.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Falls Village Inn • American Enjoy a menu that acknowledges a desire for Classic American comfort fare — think fresh-caught seafood and locally grown produce — that changes seasonally. • 33 Railroad St., Falls Village, 860-824-0033 thefallsvillageinn.com. Open daily (Closed Mon.-Tues. during winter). L (Sat.), D, SB, \$\$

Gifford's • American Enjoy a melting pot of a menu that features the flavors of Thailand, Tuscany, Vietnam, Morocco and France, as well as local farm fare. In winter, guests can enjoy a fireplace; in summer, they can eat outside on an awning-shaded dining terrace. • 9 Maple St., Kent, 860-592-0262 jgifford.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$\$, WA

Hidden Valley Eatery • American • EP Locally sourced comfort food with a number of vegetarian options. Seasonal dinner menu changes nightly. • 88 Bee Brook Road, Washington Depot, 860-619-0660 hiddenvalleyeatery.com. Closed Tues. B, L, D (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$

The Hopkins Inn • Austrian/American • EP A country inn with an Old World atmosphere known for wiener schnitzel, backendl and fresh-caught trout. • 22 Hopkins Road, Warren, 860-868-7295. Closed Mon. B L (Tues.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

John's Café • New American • RC Popular spot for New American cuisine with a Mediterranean accent: grilled pizzas, ricotta gnocchi and salmon with morels. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 693 Main St. S., Woodbury, 203-263-0188 johnscafe.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

Litchfield Saltwater Grille • Seafood Casual and fine dining with seafood, raw bar, meat, vegetarian and kids menu options. Happy hour is Mon.-Fri 4-6 p.m., and the lounge is open late Fri. & Sat. Outdoor patio and private dining available. • 26 Commons Drive, Route 202, Litchfield, 860-567-4900 litchfieldsaltwatergrille.org. Open daily. \$\$\$, E, WA

Mountainside Café • Farm to Table Modern rustic cafe offers up a fresh approach to American classics, such as the Country Burger and the Johnny Cash Skillet, in a warm and casual atmosphere. • 251 Route 7 South, Falls Village, 860-824-7876 mountainside.com/cafe. Open daily. B L D SB, \$, WA

The Painted Pony • American This cozy spot offers a variety of dishes, from prime rib and steak to pasta and pizza. Live entertainment every Thurs. • 74 Main St. (Route 61), Bethlehem, 203-266-5771 paintedponyrestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$, E, WA

Patty's Restaurant • American A delightful breakfast experience with generous portions — the menu is influenced by season and might include treats such as raisin French toast or apple, walnut and cranberry pancakes. • 499 Bantam Road, Litchfield, 860-567-3335. Open daily. B L, \$

The Restaurant at Winvian Farm • French • EP Chef Chris Eddy constantly changes the menu, using simple and seasonal ingredients accented with unusual and fresh findings. • 155 Alain White Road, Morris, 860-567-9600 winvian.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. L D, \$\$\$, WA

RSVP • French A “special concept” French restaurant, RSVP offers carefully selected five-course prix fixe meal. Alcohol is BYOB only, and dinner is by reservation only. • 7 Railroad St., West Cornwall, 860-672-7787 rsvp-restaurant.com. Open Fri.-Sun. D, \$\$\$

Scarpelli's • American Since 1936, Scarpelli's has been offering classic comfort foods like chicken parmigiana, meat loaf, fried chicken and fish-and-chips. • 865 Migeon Ave., Torrington, 860-482-7977 scarpellisclassiccatering.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$, WA

Toymakers Cafe • American Breakfast-and-lunch spot known for one-of-a-kind waffles, showstopping burgers and other comfort-food specialties. • 85 Main St., Falls Village, 860-824-8168. Closed Mon.-Wed. B L, \$, WA

Upper Crust Trattoria • Italian Northern Italian cuisine in the warm atmosphere of a Tuscan-style farm house. • 373 Litchfield Road, New Milford, 860-350-0006 theuppercrustcucina.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

The Venetian Restaurant • Classic Italian Enjoy seasonal specials and traditional fare like house-made pasta. • 52 East Main St., Torrington, 860-489-8592 thevenetianrestaurant.com. Closed Tues. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

The Village Restaurant • American Historic pub and restaurant in the heart of Litchfield. Veal Bartaucchi, Parmesan-and-horseradish-encrusted salmon and cheeseburgers top the menu. • 25 West St., Litchfield, 860-567-8307 village-litchfield.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

West Street Grill • New American An innovative restaurant with a star-studded clientele and menu to match. Serves wild fish, handmade pasta and organic salads. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 43 West St., Litchfield, 860-567-3885 weststreetgrill.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$, E (on weekends), WA

The White Hart • Farm to Table • EP High-quality cuisine made from an A-list of farm sources served in a rustic, recently remodeled historic country inn dating to 1805. • 15 Under Mountain Road, Salisbury, 860-435-0030 whitehartinn.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

The White Horse Country Pub • American • EP RC Serves American pub favorites like burgers, ribs and seafood bake, along with some English ones — shepherd's pie, fish-and-chips and bangers and mash. Outdoor dining in warmer months provides a delightful experience. • 258 New Milford Tpke., Washington, 860-868-1496 whitehorse-countrypub.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Winvian • American Simplicity and indulgence converge with fresh and spontaneous farm-to-table menus and an eclectic wine selection. Reservations are required. • 155 Alain White Road, Morris, 860-567-9600 winvian.com. Closed Tues. L (Sat.-Sun.), D (Wed.-Mon.), \$\$\$

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dining guide | litchfield county

Yokohama • Japanese • EP Delicious tempura and teriyaki dishes, plus sushi and sashimi is served at this beloved New Milford restaurant. • 131 Danbury Road, New Milford, 860-355-0556 yokohama-sushi.net. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Middlesex County

Alforno Ristorante & Brick Oven Pizzeria • Northern Italian • EP Known for a great selection of house-made ravioli, including veal osso buco with fresh ricotta ravioli, butternut squash ravioli and wild boar ravioli, as well as tagliatelle Bolognese and arugula chicken. • 1654 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-399-4166 alforno.net. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Angelico's Lake House • American Overlooking Lake Pocotopaug, Angelico's features great outside dining and a tiki hut. Try the spinach risotto, roast prime rib, stuffed salmon or lobster ravioli with sautéed shrimp. • 81 North Main St., East Hampton, 860-267-1276 angelicoslakehouse.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$\$, E, WA

Baci Grill • Modern Italian Try house specialties like grilled mango-and-chipotle pork loin, chicken sausage and broccoli rabe pasta, Guinness skirt steak and scallop risotto at this casual, trendy restaurant. • 134 Berlin Road, Cromwell, 860-613-2224 bacigrill.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E, WA

The Blue Oar • Seafood • EP Open seasonally, with open-air dining and fresh-catch entrees. BYOB; cash only. • 16 Snyder Road, Haddam, 860-345-2994 blueoarcct.wix.com. Open daily, Mother's Day weekend-Labor Day; Thurs.-Sun., Labor Day-end of Sept. L D, \$\$

Boom • American Dine on the outdoor deck overlooking a sea of yachts. Favorites include fried oysters, filet mignon Oscar with crabmeat-sherry cream and BBQ duck quesadillas. • Brewer's Pilots Point Marina, 63 Pilots Point Drive, Westbrook, 860-399-2322 boomrestaurant.net. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Celtic Cavern • Gastropub Middletown's first-ever gastropub, featuring 18 beers on tap and a dynamic menu designed to tempt every palate. • 45 Melilli Plaza, Middletown, 860-894-2954 celticcavern.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Chester's Barbecue • Barbecue • EP RC Mouthwatering, slow-cooked barbecue is the name of the game here. Choose from BBQ favorites like smoked ribs, chicken, brisket and burnt ends. • 10 West Main St., Clinton, 860-669-6868 chestersbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Chicago Sam's • American This beloved sports bar takes sports fanaticism to new heights, showing every NFL, MLB, NBA and NHL game. When it comes to the menu, this place is also a winner. • 51 Shunpike Road, Cromwell, 860-635-1860 chicagosams.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, E, WA

Chip's Pub III • Pub Grub This sports bar with a separate family-friendly dining area offers up 10-oz. burgers, as well as seafood and south-of-the-border fare. • 24 W. Main St., Clinton, 860-669-3463 chipspub3.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

Christy's • American • RC All-day breakfast is the big draw here, particularly the wide selection of specialty pancakes, but lunch and dinner are served as well. • 1261 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, 860-399-4211 facebook.com/CristysWestbrook. Open daily. B, L, D, SB, \$, WA

Cuckoo's Nest • Mexican • RC Housed in a 200-year-old barn, Cuckoo's Nest has been serving nachos, fajitas, Cajun shrimp and scallops for more than 35 years. • 1712 Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-399-9060 cuckoosnest.biz. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Dattilo Fine Italian at Water's Edge Resort and Spa • Italian Enjoy spectacular ocean views and Italian specialties like veal romano, wild mushroom arancini and lobster ravioli. And don't forget the award-winning Sunday brunch. • 1525 Boston Post Road., Westbrook, 860-399-5901 watersedgeresortandspa.com. Open daily. B L D SB, \$\$\$, E

El Pulpo Restaurant & Tapas Bar • Mediterranean Paella de mariscos and Vieiras a la Plancha (grilled diver sea scallops and lobster over frayed fontina cheese risotto and champagne sauce) are among the highlights of this romantic restaurant. • 386 Main St., Middletown, 860-788-7525. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Eli Cannon's Tap Room • Beer Bar • EP The Connecticut innovator of the modern beer bar, Eli Cannon's has been pouring sought-after brews since long before it was a trendy business model. Food favorites here include the famous nachos, chicken wings (there's 20 custom sauces), the classic cannon burger and the blackened chicken wrap. • 695 Main St., Middletown, 860-347-3547 eliccannons.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri.-Sun.) D LS, \$\$, WA

The Essex • New American • EP The adventurous, seasonal menu fuses familiar New England flavors with traditional Japanese home-style cooking. The dining room wraps around the open kitchen in a modern, minimalist layout. Prix fixe available. • 30 Main St., Centerbrook, 860-237-4189 theessex.com. Closed Mon. L (Sun.) D, \$\$\$, WA

First & Last Tavern • Italian Offers authentic Italian cuisine such as salads, pastas and brick-oven pizzas in a casual atmosphere. • 220 Main St., Middletown, 860-347-2220 firstandlasttavern.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Fresh Salt at Saybrook Point Inn • American • EP Drink in the glorious water view while savoring cioppino, merlot-braised short ribs, osso buco and Block Island swordfish. • 2 Bridge St., Old Saybrook, 860-395-2000 saybrook.com. Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$\$, E, WA

Gelston House • American This historic restaurant offers unparalleled views of the Goodspeed Opera House and the Connecticut River. Entrées include pan-seared duck breast, filet mignon and lamb ragout. • 8 Main St., East Haddam, 860-873-1411 gelstonhouse.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sun.) D LS SB, \$\$, E, WA

The Griswold Inn • American The beloved 1776 "Gris" features classic New England cuisine in the dining room, small plates and 50 wines by the glass in the wine bar, and a lively taproom. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 36 Main St., Essex, 860-767-1776 griswoldinn.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$, E, WA

Haywire Burger Bar • Burgers • EP RC Gourmet, ground in-house Black Angus burgers can be paired with one of 28 rotating craft beers or a selection from the extensive wine list. • 730 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, 860-391-8479 haywireburgerbar.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

Iguanas Ranas Taqueria • Mexican Affordable, fresh and authentic Mexican food served fresh and with home-style taste. • 484 Main St., Middletown, 860-346-8630 iguanasranastaqueria.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$

It's Only Natural (ION) Restaurant • Vegetarian • EP RC Vegan/vegetarian offerings with a Southwestern bent, plus a full organic bar. • 606 Main St., Middletown, 860-346-9210 ionrestaurant.com. Open daily. L, D (Mon.-Sat.), SB, \$\$

Jack Rabbits • Burgers • EP Enjoy gourmet burgers, hot dogs and wings in a family-friendly atmosphere, or order it with a beverage at the Rabbit Hole Tavern next door. • 254 Main St., Old Saybrook, 860-510-0048 jackrabbitsct.com. Open daily. L D, \$

The L&E French and Good Elephant Bistro • French / Vietnamese The reopened L&E French offers bistro favorites and modern interpretations of classic dishes. Meanwhile, the elephant in this room is flavor—and lots of it. From five-spice duck to sushi-grade tuna, this restaurant serves the salty, sour, bitter and sweet flavors of Vietnamese cuisine. • 59 Main St., Chester, 860-526-5301 goodelephantcafe.com. Open Wed-Sat. D, \$\$

La Boca Mexican Restaurant and Cantina • Mexican Sizzling fajitas, carne asada, grilled mahi mahi and the La Boca classic burrito are just some of the Mexican cuisine favorites offered at this fun restaurant with a patio and live music. • 337 Main St., Middletown, 860-347-4777 labocamexican.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E, WA

La Foresta • Italian This big and beautiful ristorante serves garden-fresh, ingredient-driven fine Northern Italian cuisine. It also has a VIP wine cellar and one of the state's best wine selections. Lunch served Mon.-Fri. 11:30-2:30. • 163 Route 81, Killingworth, 860-663-1155 laforestarestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, WA

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • Seafood • RC This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 86 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, 860-669-0767 ljfishale.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Liv's Oyster Bar & Restaurant • Seafood • EP RC Liv's is a stylish, small neighborhood restaurant housed in an old movie theater. Stonington sea scallops, wild salmon, organic chicken and heirloom vegetables top the menu. • 166 Main St., Old Saybrook, 860-395-5577 livsoysterbar.com. Closed Tues. D, \$\$, WA

Luce • American • EP Have your aged steaks grilled over wood chips—there are 20 types to choose from. Offers seafood, an extensive wine list and a great bar atmosphere. • 98 Washington St., Middletown, 860-344-0222 lucect.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

Luigi's • Italian Enjoy classic Italian favorites like seafood cannelloni, chicken leonardo, veal parmigiana, whole clams, prime rib and other dishes. • 1295 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-388-9190 luigis-restaurant.com. Closed Mon. (except in July and Aug.) D, \$\$, WA

Mondo • Pizza This casual, family-owned restaurant specializes in brick-oven, New York-style thin crust pizza. There is also a beer and wine bar. • 10 Main St., Middletown, 860-343-3300 mondomiddletown.com. Open daily L D, \$\$, WA

Puerto Vallarta • Mexican • RC Authentic, traditional Mexican cuisine is prepared fresh daily—sometimes even at your table—mixing time-honored recipes with innovative culinary techniques. • 200 Main Metro Square, Middletown, 860-852-0080 puertovallartausa.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

River Tavern • American Farm-to-table pioneer Jonathan Rapp wears top toque at this town fixture. On the menu: made-to-order guacamole, grilled Stonington swordfish, New York strip. • 23 Main St., Chester, 860-526-9417 rivertavernrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

Rustica • Italian The food is made fresh daily, from the pasta to the salads to the homemade desserts. Also offering a varied wine collection. • 189 Middlesex Turnpike, Chester, 860-526-9021 rusticact.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$\$

Taino Smokehouse • Barbecue • EP Their pork, beef and chicken products are wood smoked in Taino's large Ole Hickory Pits smoker. Seating opens up to the large backdoor patio in season. • 482 South Main St., Middletown, 860-358-9828 tainosmokehouse.com. Closed Mon. L, D, \$, WA

Taste of China • Chinese • EP Authentic Szechuan/Chengdu-style food in an elegant yet casual setting, with a full bar and an extensive beer list. • 233 E. Main St., Clinton, 860-664-4454 tasteofchinaus.com. Open daily. L D, \$

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The Tea Kettle Restaurant • Breakfast This breakfast and brunch destination specializes in gluten-free and paleo dishes, from pancakes and muffins to waffles and eggs benedict. The jumbo-size pancakes are popular. • 1395 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-577-5039 theteakettlerestaurant.com. Open daily. B L, \$, E, WA

Westbrook Lobster • Seafood • RC Offers the freshest fish possible in dishes ranging from baked stuffed lobster to teriyaki-grilled salmon to seafood paella. • 346 E. Main St., Clinton, 860-664-9464; 300 Church St., Wallingford, 203-265-5071 westbrooklobster.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Osa • Italian • EP Shared plates offer complex, Italian-inspired tastes in a striking, slatted pine décor. • 500 Main St., Middletown, 860-358-9782 osarestaurant.com. Closed Sun.-Tues. D LS, \$\$, WA

| New Haven County |

116 Crown • American Tapas / Small Plates • EP Dine on sliders, pizzettes and charcuterie and cheese in a loungelike atmosphere — along with exciting and creative house cocktails. • 116 Crown St., New Haven, 203-777-3116 116crown.com. Closed Mon. D LS, \$\$, E, WA

121 Restaurant @ OXC • American Watch the planes take off and land at 121, located at the Waterbury-Oxford Airport. The menu runs from great pizzas and burgers to an eclectic mix of American favorites. • 7 Juliano Drive, Oxford, 203-262-0121 121restaurantgroup.com/oxc. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E, WA

Adriana's • Italian Old-fashioned Italian fare, served up in generous portions. • 771 Grand Ave., New Haven, 203-865-6474 adrianasnewhaven.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$, WA

Amoy's Cajun Creole & American Restaurant • Cajun/Creole Louisiana-inspired cuisine is spicy, flavorful and unique to the area. • 40 Orange St., New Haven, 203-691-7984 facebook.com/amoyrestaurant. Closed Sun. & Mon. D, \$, E, WA

Archie Moore's Bar & Restaurant • American • RC Casual pub-style dining with burgers, nachos and salads. And don't miss the award-winning buffalo chicken wings. • 188½ Willow St., New Haven, 203-773-9870; 39 N. Main St., Wallingford, 203-265-7100; 15 Factory Lane, Milford, 203-876-5088; 17 Elizabeth St., Derby, 203-732-3255 archiemoores.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$

Atelier Florian • Seafood New American fine-dining restaurant with a Belgium flair, featuring a raw bar, fresh seafood and private dining space. • 1166 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-859-5999 atelierflorian.net. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$

Baja's • Mexican • EP Casual, authentic Mexican food. • 63 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-799-2252. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Ballou's Restaurant & Wine Bar • Italian A casual and relaxed wine bar. Full menu with fondue and much more. Has an outdoor, dog-friendly patio and gluten-free menu. • 51 Whitefield St., Guilford, 203-453-0319 ballouswinebar.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Bar Bouchee • French • EP RC Inspired by the neighborhood bistros of Lyon, France — known as bouchons — the menu features authentic French bistro classics as well as innovative cocktails and a carefully selected wine list. • 8 Scotland Ave., Madison, 203-318-8004 barbouchee.com. Open daily. D, \$\$

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • Spanish Mediterranean • EP RC Hip restaurant serving Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine — including tapas, hot and cold. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 155 Temple St., New Haven, 203-848-3000 barcelonawinebar.com. Open daily. D LS SB, \$\$, WA

Bella Gio • Italian • RC Classic and original recipes served up with the freshest ingredients and paired with a full variety of wine, beer and liquor. Patio dining available. • 835 W. Main St., Cheshire, 203-439-9175 bellagioc.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

Bella's Café • American Stylish and cozy cafe serves breakfast and lunch all day during the week, or brunch on weekends. • 896 Whalley Ave., New Haven, 203-387-7107 bellascafe.com. Closed Mon. B L SB, \$

Bin 100 • Mediterranean Feast on delicious Mediterranean cuisine elegantly served in a spacious dining room. • 100 Lansdale Ave., Milford, 203-882-1400 bin100restaurant.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$, E, WA

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Bistro Mediterraneo • Mediterranean • RC This casual and relaxed restaurant has Spanish and Mediterranean influences and offers a variety of beloved dishes including scallops parrilla, paella and brussels sprout salad. • 383 Main St., East Haven, 203-467-2500 bistromediterraneanandtapasbar.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Brazi's • Italian Family-friendly restaurant provides a flair for traditional Italian dishes served in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. • 201 Food Terminal Plaza, New Haven, 203-498-8335 caskrepublic.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Bufalina • Pizza • EP Wood-fired, brick-oven pizza topped with water buffalo mozzarella brings the taste of Italy. • 1070 Boston Post Road, Guilford, 203-458-1377 bufalinact.com/. Closed Sun. • Mon. D, \$, WA

Cask Republic • American • EP Serious chef-crafted American fare as well as creative interpretations of globally inspired dishes with an inviting and fun vibe. • 179 Crown St., New Haven, 475-238-8335 caskrepublic.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Ceviche • Latin Fusion Several styles of ceviche are offered here. In addition, the place features a variety of sizzling Latin dishes, cocktails and 30 types of tapas. Try the Granada Mojito, which features pomegranate flavors. • 530 Middlebury Road, Middlebury, 203-527-7634 cevichelatinkitchen.com. Closed Mon. L (Wed.-Thurs.) D LS, \$\$, WA

Chip's Family Restaurant • American Famous for its perfect pancakes, Chip's also has a creative lunch and dinner menu, and guests are welcome to BYOB. • 321 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-795-5065 chipsrestaurants.com. Open daily. B L D, \$

Claire's Corner Copia • Vegetarian • EP RC Café-style spot offering globe-trotting dishes like organic-mushroom crêpes, Bengal curry, Irish breakfast and Lithuanian coffee cake. • 1000 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-562-3888 clairescornercopia.com. Open daily. B L D SB, \$, WA

Colony Grill • Pizza This Irish tavern's single menu offering is its one-of-a-kind, thin crust pizza served with a signature "hot oil" topping. • 36 Broad St., Milford, 203-876-1935 colonygrill.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Consiglio's Restaurant • Classic Italian Family-owned and -run for more than 70 years, Consiglio's is known for classic home-style favorites like homemade cavatelli and braciole, eggplant rollatini and lasagna. • 165 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-4489 consiglios.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri., Sun.) D, \$\$

Coromandel Cuisine of India • Indian Wide range of tasty Indian fare is served in a small, tastefully done space. • 185 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-795-9055 coromandelcuisine.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Cristy's Madison • American • EP This restaurant and bar offers breakfast and dinner, as well as a complete burger menu. • 73 W. Wharf Road, Madison, 203-245-7377 cristysmadison.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$

Dew Drop Inn • Pub Grub • EP RC Casual pub and grill known for its burgers, wide selection of craft beers and Peanut Butter & Jelly Chicken Wings. • 5 North Ave., Derby, 203-735-7757 facebook.com/Dewdropinnct. Open daily. L, D, LS, \$\$, WA

Dino's Seafood • Seafood This family-run favorite of local North Haven diners for more than four decades prides itself on serving high-quality seafood with the taste of love and joy in every order. Customer favorites include strip clams, fritters, lobster rolls, and top-split hot dogs accompanied with a local craft beer. • 540 Washington Ave., North Haven, 203-239-5548 dinosseafood.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$, WA

Domenic & Pia Downtown Pizzeria • Pizza • EP Enjoy the pizza made with simple, straightforward ingredients, or go for one of their signature subs. • 3 Brook St., Waterbury, 203-753-3401 facebook.com/domenickandpiadowntownpizzeria. Closed Sun. L D, \$

Donahue's Madison Beach Grille • Irish Pub Casual shoreline dining serving up fresh seafood, homemade clam chowder and lobster bisque soups, premier salads and daily specials. Live music on the weekends. • 1320 Boston Post Road, Madison, 203-318-8362 donahuesmadisonbeachgrille.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

Elm City Social • American • EP Features creative and upscale pub-friendly fare in a visually impressive setting. There is also an assortment of excellent cocktails offered. • 286 College St., New Haven, 475-441-7436 elmcitysocial.com. Open daily. L D, LS, \$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 157 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-5762 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$, WA

G-Zen • Vegetarian • EP RC Focused on green business ethics, G-Zen offers up locally sourced vegetarian, vegan, organic and sustainable cuisine. • 2 E. Main St., Branford, 203-208-0443 g-zen.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Sat.) D, \$\$, E

Geronimo Tequila Bar & Southwest Grill • Southwestern Fusion Mix of traditional Native American, Mexican, Spanish and Anglo-American fare, with bold flavors and authentic ingredients. • 271 Crown St., New Haven, 203-777-7700 geronimobarandgrill.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$

Goodfellas Restaurant • Italian The extensive menu is a veritable Best Hits of Italy, featuring pastas and gnocchi, pork chop Milanese, steak pizzaiola, veal saltimbocca and the chef's signature filet cognac. • 702 State St., New Haven, 203-785-8722 goodfellasrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Heirloom • Modern Continental Seasonal Farm & Coastal menu draws its inspiration from the New England pantry with fresh ingredients sourced from regional heritage growers and artisan suppliers. Expansive international wine collection. • The Study at Yale, 1157 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-503-3919 heirloomnewhaven.com. Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$, WA

Home • American Whether in the main "dining room" or the "living room" lounge, Home offers up locally sourced food and a wide selection of regional craft brews to make its guests feel comfortable and comforted. • 1114 Main St., Branford, 203-483-5896 homerestaurantct.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

House of Naan • Indian • EP Contemporary and savory Indian dishes, with Fusion craft cocktails enlivened by authentic fresh Indian spices and an enjoyable atmosphere. • 65 Howe St., New Haven, 203-562-6226 houseofnaan.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Ibiza Tapas • Tapas Enjoy a taste of Spain with a wide variety of either hot or cold tapas and an extensive wine bar, in either the vibrantly colored dining area or outdoor patio. • 1832 Dixwell Ave., Hamden, 203-909-6512 ibizatapaswinebar.com. Closed Mon. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$, WA

J. Christian's • New American A smart, lively restaurant and lounge that takes no shortcuts in preparing New American cuisine with a Southern accent. • 9 North Main St., Wallingford, 203-265-6393 jchristians.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$

L'Orcio • Contemporary Italian This upscale contemporary restaurant features an outdoor patio and a menu of house-made pastas, grilled whole fish and steaks with seasonal cuisine. • 806 State St., New Haven, 203-777-6670 lorcio.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri.) D, \$\$

La Tavola Ristorante • Classic Italian • EP Enjoy a twist on classic Italian cuisine with prosciutto-wrapped figs, pumpkin ravioli and pepper-encrusted Ahi tuna. • 702 Highland Ave., Waterbury, 203-755-2211 latavolaristorante.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Lao Sze Chuan • Asian In Chinese, Lao means "old, authentic, traditional," and that's the restaurant's goal: to provide authentic Chinese cuisine at a reasonable price. • 1585 Boston Post Road, Milford, 203-783-0558 tonygourmetgroup.com. Open daily. L D, \$

Le Petit Café • French • EP Simple, fresh and elegant dining with the menu du jour in a cozy, unpretentious atmosphere. • 225 Montowese St., Branford, 203-483-9791 lepetitcafe.net. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$\$

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • Seafood • RC This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 501 Long Wharf Drive, New Haven, 203-691-6619; 1301 Boston Post Road, Madison, 203-245-7289 jfishsale.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Mamoun's • Middle Eastern • RC Authentic Middle Eastern cuisine, made from scratch using fresh, natural ingredients, fine imported spices and signature recipes, served in a traditional environment. • 85 Howe St., New Haven, 203-562-8444 mamouns.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

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Midnight Ramen • Asian • RC From 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. Fri. & Sat., Anya Sushi serves authentic Japanese Ramen, as well as varieties of sake, wine and Japanese beer. • 1150 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-891-6716 midnightramen.com/. Fri. & Sat. only L\$, \$, WA

MiKro Beer Bar • Gastropub • EP The unique menu includes the "French Revolution" flatbread, steamed mussels & frites, and shrimp & grits. The name (pronounced "micro") refers to the bar's intimate space and to the lineup of microbrews. • 3000 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-553-7676 mikrobeerbar.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$, WA

Miya's • Sushi • EP Sushi restaurant like no other, thanks to chef Bun Lai's unique creations. • 68 Howe St., New Haven, 203-777-9760 miyassushi.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Modern Apizza • Pizza • EP RC Classic New Haven destination for brick-oven pizza and calzone. • 874 State St., New Haven, 203-776-5306 modernapizza.com. Closed Mon. L, D, \$, WA

Moxie • American • EP High-end American cuisine is the star here. Try the perfectly cooked burger that comes with awesome fries doused in kosher salt and malt vinegar powder. • 52 Wall St., Madison, 203-421-6963 moxie-bar.com. Closed Mon. D (Tues.-Sun) L (Fri.-Sun.), \$\$, WA

Olea • Spanish • EP RC World-class, full-service Spanish restaurant, with a fun tapas bar. • 39 High St., New Haven, 203-780-8925 oleanewhaven.com. Closed Sun. D, \$\$\$, WA

Olives and Oil • Italian • EP Recognizable and familiar dishes are done in adventurous ways that are exciting and well executed. • 124 Temple St., New Haven, 203-891-5870 olivesandoil.com. Open daily. L D L\$, \$, WA

Park Central Tavern • American The dynamic weekly menu showcases signature entrées and classic favorites made with fresh New England ingredients. • 1640 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-287-8887 parkcentraltavern.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP RC The original home of New Haven-style thin-crust pizza, cooked in a coal-fired brick oven which is carefully replicated in Pepe's satellite locations. • 157 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-5762; 130 Reidville Drive, Waterbury, 475-235-2145 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

The Place • Seafood • EP RC Outdoor restaurant where seafood is cooked over an 18-foot fire pit. Open seasonally May-Sept. and weekends in Oct. • 901 Boston Post Road, Guilford, 203-453-9276 theplaceguilford.com. Open daily. L (Sat.-Sun.), D, \$, WA

Prime 16 • Burgers • EP Select from a list of gourmet burgers or build your own, plus a variety of sandwiches, salads and small plates. • 172 Temple St., New Haven, 203-782-1616; 464 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-553-9616 prime16.com. Open daily. L, D, L\$ (Orange), \$

Ristorante Luce • Classic Italian Enjoy the double-cut veal chops, pane cotto, risotto pescatore and daily fish specials. Extensive wine list. • 2987 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-407-8000 ristoranteluce.net. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$

Roia • French/Italian This new spot in the Taft Hotel building evokes a golden era when romance reigned. On the menu: artichoke soup, chicken al mattone and panna cotta. • 261 College St., New Haven, 203-200-7045 roiarestaurant.com. Open Wed-Sun. D, \$\$\$, WA

Sally's Apizza, New Haven • Pizza • EP Each pie is individually hand-made and carefully baked in the coal-fired oven at this New Haven landmark. • 237 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-624-5271 sallysapizza.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. L D, \$, WA

Sake Asian Fusion • Asian Fusion Indian pancakes with curry sauce and Vietnamese-style grilled pork are just a few of the Asian-fusion dishes on the menu. • 730 Main St. S., Southbury, 203-264-2888 sakefusionsouthbury.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$, WA

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Sans Souci • American A casual mainstay in the area that prides itself on offering fresh pasta, steak, chicken, veal, seafood and other crowd pleasers. • 2003 N. Broad St., Meriden, 203-639-1777 sanssoucirestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$

Señor Pancho's • Mexican Festive spot serving up terrific fresh salsa and margaritas to go with mole poblano, steak ranchero and fajitas. • 280 Cheshire Road, Prospect, 203-758-7788; 385 Main St. S., Southbury, 203-262-6988 senorpanchos.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$, E, WA

Shell & Bones Oyster Bar & Grill • Seafood • EP RC This waterside restaurant features the celebrated creations of executive chef Arturo Franco-Camacho whose specialties include steak and seafood. • 100 South Water St., New Haven, 203-787-3466 shellandbones.com. Open daily. D L (Sat.-Sun.), \$\$\$

Shoreline Diner, Guilford • American The seasonal menu focuses on fresh, natural ingredients, with lots of vegetarian and vegan options. • 345 Boston Post Road, Guilford, 203-458-7380 shorediner.com. Open daily. BLD, \$, WA

Solun Tapas Bar & Restaurant • Spanish Solun is Spanish for "the sun and the moon" and this restaurant promises an escape from the ordinary with a wide array of tapas and other food classics from Spain. • 245 Amity Road, Woodbridge, 203-298-9741 soluntapasbar.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D (Tues.-Sat.) SB, \$, E, WA

Soul de Cuba • Afro-Cuban The Soul de Cuba Cafe concept is rooted in the idea of promoting and preserving Afro-Cuban culture through sharing traditional Cuban and African food and art. • 283 Crown St., New Haven, 203-498-2822 souldecuba.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$

Spiga • Italian • RC Pair a small plate, entrée or brick-oven pizza with one of more than 30 wines on hand. • 136 Main St., New Canaan, 203-920-1351 eatataspiga.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri. & Sat.), SB, \$, WA

Stowe's • Seafood This classic seafood shack has a simple menu of fresh fish, fried New England style, plus perfect lobster rolls, all served in paper boats. • 347 Beach St., West Haven, 203-934-1991 stowesseafood.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

Taste of China • Chinese • EP Authentic Szechuan/Chengdu-style food in an elegant yet casual setting, with a full bar and an extensive beer list. • 954 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-745-5872 tasteofchinaus.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$

Thai Sweet Treats • Thai The expansive menu offers unusual Thai delicacies you won't find anywhere else, but the stars here are the steamed desserts. • 1060 Boston Post Road, Guilford, 203-533-5594 thaisweettreats.com. Closed Sun. & Mon. L D, \$, WA

Tikkaway Grill • Indian Build your own wrap or rice bowl by choosing your base and one of Tikkaway's signature sauces. Vegan options available. • 135 Orange St., New Haven, 203-562-1299; 2 Howe St., New Haven, 203-624-1299 tikkawaygrill.com. Open daily (Orange St.); Mon.-Fri. (Howe St.) L D, \$

Tre Scalini • Italian Elegantly decorated Trattoria-style restaurant offering traditional and creative Italian fare, with a full bar and an extensive wine list. A private banquet room is available, as is outside patio dining during the summer. • 100 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-777-3373 trescalinirestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Turkish Kebab House • Turkish Offers a range of Turkish fare, with seafood and vegetarian options available. • 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven, 203-933-0002 turkishkebabhouse.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$

Union League Cafe • French • EP RC Designed to capture the conviviality and old-world charm of a Parisian brasserie — less formal, more lively, unpressured but with attention to memorable food, wine and service. • 1032 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-562-4299 unionleaguecafe.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$

Viron Rando's Osteria • Italian The seasonal menu includes well-known and loved Italian classics as well as new dishes, using local, sustainable and organic ingredients. • 1721 Highland Ave, Cheshire, 203-439-2727 vironrandoosteria.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$

The Wharf • New American • EP This spot at the Madison Beach Hotel serves up panko-crusted sea bass, duck two ways and bourbon-glazed pork tenderloin — with a side of water views. • 94 West Wharf Road, Madison, 203-350-0014 madisonbeachhotel.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$\$, WA

Wood-n-Tap • American Hip, fun eateries known for great burgers and great beer. You'll also love the pizza, pasta, salads and sandwiches. • 311 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-799-9663; 2100 Dixwell Ave., Hamden, 203-248-9663; 970 N. Colony Road, Wallingford, 203-265-9663 woodntap.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Zafra Cuban Restaurant & Rum Bar • Cuban With a collection of 300 different kinds of rum — one of the largest in the country — this New Haven establishment is Connecticut's first true rum bar. Small, dark and atmospheric, this hip locale features chef Tadahiho ("Haya") Hayasaka's subtle and sometimes fanciful take on Cuban soul food. • 259 Orange St., New Haven, 203-859-5342 zafrarumbar.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$\$, WA

Zaragoza • Tapas • EP Tapas and hand-crafted cocktails in a modern, sophisticated space. • 31 Bank St., New Milford, 860-350-0701 zaragozarestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Fri. & Sat.) D SB, \$\$\$

Zinc • American • EP Their modern interpretation of "American Food" is local market-inspired and globally infused with a focus on sustainable food, offering a dining experience fit for even the most enthusiastic of foodies. • 964 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-624-0507 zincfood.com. Closed Sun. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$

| New London County |

Al Dente • Italian Savor the mouthwatering flavors of frutti di mare, farfalle con pollo and medaglioni de manzo, followed up with cannoli or tiramisu at this Italian dining gem. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, 800-FOXWOODS foxwoods.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$\$, E, WA

Alta Strada • Italian Try favorites like chittara with spicy lobster and fresh peas and grilled lamb chops with asparagus, potato and pickled onion salad. • MGM Grand at Foxwoods, 240 MGM Grand Drive, Mashantucket, 860-312-2582 altastradarestaurant.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$\$\$, WA

Ballo Italian Restaurant & Social Club • Italian A sumptuous restaurant inspired by the magnificent 12th-century Abbey of San Galgano in Siena. On the menu: pizza and pasta, striped bass and veal porterhouse. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-1100 balloitalian.com. Open daily. L (Sat.-Sun.) D LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$\$, WA

Bar Americain • American This brasserie serves up Bobby Flay specialties like lobster-avocado cocktails, buttermilk-fried chicken with biscuits — and big-time glamour. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8000 baramericain.com. Open daily. D, \$\$\$

The Bistro • Seafood Formerly Chaplin's & Friends, The Bistro specializes in locally caught seafood and regional American bistro favorites. Standouts include halibut sautéed with almonds, tuna with fresh mango and roasted red-pepper sauce and swordfish garnished with salsa. • 165 Bank St., New London, 860-990-5263 chaplinsandfriends.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Bleu Squid • American A bakery and cheese shop serving 30 cheeses and 40 different cupcakes. Also serves up grilled cheese sandwiches to go, freshly made and to order, including the best-selling lobster grilled cheese. • 27 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, 860-536-6343 dessertsmysticct.com. Open daily. L, \$, WA

Bobby's Burger Palace • American This burger palace serves an array of burgers inspired by chef Bobby Flay's extensive travels. Each is a tribute to a different American regional flavor and tradition. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 888-226-7711 bobbysburgerpalace.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Breakwater • Seafood Located where Skipper's Dock used to be and offers stunning views and ocean-to-table dishes including some with Asian or Latin-American touches. • 66 Water St., Stonington, 860-415-8123 breakwaterstonington.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. L D, \$\$\$, WA

C.C. O'Brien's • Irish Pub A neighborhood sports pub with great food, friendly service, sports on 20 HDTVs and live entertainment on Saturday nights. • 8 Mechanic St., Pawcatuck, 860-599-2034 ccobriens.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$, WA

Caffé NV • Greek • RC Favorites include pasta a la Philip and shrimp Saganaki at this restaurant with stained-glass windows and brick walls. • 57 Boston Post Road, Waterford, 860-444-8111 cafenv.com. Closed Sun. L D LS, \$\$\$, WA

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The Captain Daniel Packer Inn • American This 1754 whaler's inn features a view of the Mystic River along with dishes like lemon pepper chicken, filet mignon and salmon. • 32 Water St., Mystic, 860-536-3555 danielpacker.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Cedars Restaurant • American Offers lounge seating and cozy booths. Diners can count on the finest cuts of certified dry-aged prime beef and fresh seafood. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, 800-FOXWOODS foxwoods.com. Open daily. D, \$\$\$, WA

Chester's Barbecue • Barbecue • EP RC Mouthwatering, slow-cooked barbecue is the name of the game here. Choose from BBQ favorites like smoked ribs, chicken, brisket and burnt ends. • 943 Poquonock Road, Groton, 860-449-6868 chestersbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

The Chestnut Grille • American The winning seasonal menu here includes succulent treats such as pan-roasted duck breast and seared diver scallops. • The Bee and Thistle Inn, 100 Lyme St., Old Lyme, 860-434-1667 beethistleinn.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, \$\$\$, E

David Burke Prime • American An updated steakhouse menu with dry-aged beef, as well as terrific pork, chicken and seafood specialties. The steak served here is truly a cut above. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, 860-312-8753 davidburke-prime.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$

Engine Room • American The focus is on "beer, burgers and bourbon," within the walls of a historic refurbished marine engine building with views of the Mystic River. • 14 Holmes St., Mystic, 860-415-8117 engineroomct.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$

Flanders Fish Market & Restaurant • Seafood • RC Flanders excels at lobster bisque, fish-and-chips and broiled seafood. Known for its bountiful Sunday buffet, fresh seafood market and New England clambakes. • 22 Chesterfield Road, East Lyme, 860-739-8866 flandersfish.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, any pie here is worth the wait. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8888 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$, WA

Frank's Gourmet Grille • American The "continental menu with a Mediterranean flair" serves up bold, rich flavors in its many seafood options and Italian-influenced dishes. • 56 Whitehall Ave., Mystic, 860-415-4666 franksgourmetgrilleinmystic.com. Open Tues.-Sun. L D, \$\$\$

Harbour House Restaurant and Bar • Seafood Sample ahi tuna tacos, lobster, grilled swordfish and other seafood favorites in a casually elegant and comfortable setting with stunning water views. • 3 Williams Ave., Mystic, 860-536-8144 harbourhousect.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$, E, WA

The Inishmor • Irish American Pub Get a taste of the old country at this authentic Irish pub where specialties include Gaelic favorites like chips and curry and shepherd's pie. • 20 Main St., Colchester inishmorpib.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$, E

Jasper White's Summer Shack • Seafood This award-winning restaurant features live lobster and crab, fried seafood, chowders and wood-grilled fish. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-9500 summershackrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$

Johnny's Peking Tokyo • Asian Fusion The finest in Asian-fusion cuisine, including ginger duck, shrimp and pork Hunan-style, sushi and sashimi. Dine in or order online for pickup. • 12 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, 860-572-9991 johnnysushibar.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Kensington's at Norwich Inn • American A first-class restaurant serving gourmet food with an emphasis on natural meats, fresh, locally sourced produce and healthy preparations. • 607 West Thames St., Norwich, 860-425-3630 thespaatnorwichinn.com/kensingtons. Open daily. B L D SB, \$\$\$, E, WA

Kitchen Little • American Enjoy a panoramic view of the Mystic River while dining on eggs Benedict, omelets and other savory egg dishes at this breakfast destination. • 36 Quarry Road, Mystic, 860-536-2122. Open daily for breakfast. B L (Mon.-Fri.) SB, \$

M/BAR, Mystic • Tapas • EP Restored gas station featuring coffee, wine, spirits and inspired small plates. • 30 Broadway Ave., Mystic, 860-245-4499 mbarct.com. Open daily. B & L (Mon.-Fri.), D (Wed.-Sun.), \$\$\$, WA

Michael Jordan's Steak House • American USDA prime steaks, chops and fresh seafood paired with an extensive wine list. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8600 michaeljordansteakhouse.com. Open daily. D, \$\$\$

Morning Glory Café • American Family-owned restaurant located on the Lieutenant River in Old Lyme serves breakfast (all day on the weekends) and lunch, and features a menu with both American and Asian cuisine. • 11 Halls Road, Old Lyme, 860-434-0480. Open daily. B L, \$, WA

Octagon • American The menu at this upscale yet relaxed steakhouse includes the signature 24-ounce, bone-in rib eye, 14-ounce Kobe sirloin and wild striped bass. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • Mystic Marriott Hotel, 625 North Road, Groton, 860-326-0360 octagonsteakhouse.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$\$, R

The Old Lyme Inn • American The Inn's restaurant and bar features a locally sourced menu with a modern twist on traditional dishes. • 85 Lyme St., Old Lyme, 860-434-2600 oldlymeinn.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Oyster Club • American • EP This popular place showcases food that travels the shortest distance from farm and sea to table, with seasonality and location determining the day's dishes. • 13 Water St., Mystic, 860-415-9266 oysterclubct.com. Closed Tues. L (Sat.) D SB, \$\$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza • EP RC The original home of New Haven-style thin-crust pizza, cooked in a coal-fired brick oven which is carefully replicated in Pepe's satellite locations. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8888 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

The Pita Spot • Middle Eastern Serving Lebanese and Mediterranean food – fresh, artfully seasoned and cooked to perfection. • 45 Williams Ave., Mystic, 860-415-4656 thepitaspot.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$

Rebeka Fresh Pasta Restaurant • Italian • RC Authentic Italian pasta dishes, made fresh daily. • 135 Boston Post Road, East Lyme, 860-691-1155 rebekafreshpastarestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Red 36 • American • EP It's all about the sea at this waterside hotspot that offers delicious dinner with a great view. • 2 Washington St., Mystic, 860-536-3604 red36ct.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$\$

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Rise, Mystic • American • RC Breakfast spot in a homey and comfortable atmosphere, offering both standard breakfast fare and some unique twists. Lunch is also available. • 10 Water St, Mystic, 860-415-9519 risemysticct.com. Closed Tues. B, L, SB, \$, WA

S&P Oyster Co. • Seafood • RC Serving traditional New England seafood with a South American flair. Enjoy oysters on the half shell, PEI mussels, fresh cuts of fish and Creekstone Farms steaks grilled over hardwoods. • 1 Holmes St., Mystic, 860-536-2674 sp-oyster.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

The Velvet Vine • Bistro Affordable and satisfying fare in a bright and airy space with a patchwork of industrial design. • 22 Bayview Ave. #14, Stonington, 860-415-8446 thevelvetvinect.com. Closed Mon. & Tues. L D SB, \$, WA

Tolland County

Asian Bistro • Asian Fusion • EP A popular hibachi steakhouse/bar offering Asian-fusion dishes along with sushi and sashimi. • 95 Storrs Road, Mansfield, 860-456-8316 asianbistromansfield.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Bidwell Tavern & Cafe • American This 1822 Coventry tavern, once the town hall, offers prime rib, chicken wings and 24 beers on tap. • 1260 Main St. (Route 31), Coventry, 860-742-6978. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E, WA

The Blue Oak at the Nathan Hale Inn • American On the UConn campus, enjoy honest New England-style dishes and lighter fare. Great wine selection. • 855 Bolton Road, Storrs, 860-427-7888 nathanhaleinn.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$\$

Camille's Wood Fired Pizza • Pizza • EP Pair the fresh pizzas, pastas and artisan dishes with a diverse selection of wines or craft beers. • 23 Fieldstone Commons, Tolland, 860-896-6976 camillespizza.com. Closed Mon. L, D, \$, WA

Elmo's Dockside • Seafood Known for fresh, local seafood, homemade clam chowder and lobster bisque, USDA High Choice beef, poultry and pasta dishes. • 48 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, 860-646-3474 elmosdockside.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

Georgina's Italian Restaurant • Italian Warm and inviting — try the calamari appetizer, chicken Athena, lasagna and chicken parmigiano. • 275 Boston Tpke., Bolton, 860-647-0345 georginasrestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Lake View • Seafood / Italian Fresh seafood, Italian dishes, paninis, salads, burgers and wings are served in a casual, romantic waterside setting. • 50 Lake St., Coventry, 860-498-0500 coventrylakeview.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, E, WA

Little Mark's Big BBQ • Barbecue Little Mark's famous homemade sauces, such as Kansas City Sweet, Pork Pickin' Vinegar and Texas Hot, enhance the beef and pork ribs. • 226 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-872-1410 littlemarksbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

Pancho Loco • Mexican Don your shorts and Hawaiian shirt and try this Parrothead paradise for sizzling fajitas and chillin' margaritas. • 218 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-871-1819 pancholoco.net. Open daily. L D, \$, E, WA

Rein's New York Style Deli-Restaurant • American • EP RC Bright and bustling Jewish deli serving everything from challah French toast and potato pancakes to pastrami reubens and cheese blintzes. • 435 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, 860-875-1344 reinsdeli.com. Open daily. B L D LS SB, \$, WA

Tavern House Grill • American This pub-style sports bar features live entertainment and regular karaoke events. On the menu: steaks, burgers, grilled sandwiches and wings. • 200 Merrow Road, Tolland, 860-872-0332 tavernhousegrill.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$, E, WA

Trattoria da Lepri • Italian This family-owned and -run eatery prepares dishes from scratch with local ingredients. • 89 West Road, Ellington, 860-875-1111 trattoriadalepri.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

True Blue Tavern at the Nathan Hale Inn • American Great casual dining in a fun atmosphere celebrating the spirit of UConn athletics. • 855 Bolton Road, Storrs, 860-427-7888 nathanhaleinn.com. Open daily. D, \$, WA

Utsav Indian Cuisine • Indian • EP This gem boasts a menu of delectable Indian treats such as shamm saavara or calamari cochin. • 575 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-871-8714 utsavcuisine.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$, WA

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Vernon Diner • Continental Enjoy anything from homemade French toast and Greek specialties to steak, seafood and pasta at this friendly spot in Vernon. • 453 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, 860-875-8812 vernondiner.com. Open daily. B L D LS, \$, WA

Willington Pizza House • Pizza Unusual designer pizza concoctions, including red-potato and seafood casino. • 25 River Road (Route 32), Willington, 860-429-7433 willingtonpizza.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Wood-n-Tap • American Known for great burgers and great beer. You'll also love the pizza, pasta, salads and sandwiches. • 236 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, 860-872-6700 woodntap.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Windham County

85 Main • New American There's something for everyone at this Main Street fixture: from sushi to duck-liver pâté, pulled-pork barbecue to wild-mushroom ravioli. • 85 Main St., Putnam, 860-928-1660 85main.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$\$, WA

Bella's Bistro • Northern Italian An upscale spot with a seasonal menu serving veal, beef, chicken, pork, pizzas and more. • 75 Main St., Putnam, 860-928-7343 bellasbistro.com. Closed Mon. L D (Tues.-Sat.), \$\$, WA

Coriander Cafe • American Offers breakfast, lunch and dinner with a focus on local and seasonal homestyle cooking, plus a specials menu that changes daily. • 192 Eastford Road, Eastford, 860-315-7691 coriandercafeeastford.com. Open daily. B L D (Tues.-Sat.), \$

The Courthouse Bar & Grille • American • EP Serves 20 great appetizers, plus "arresting" main courses such as seafood Alfredo and Montreal sirloin. • 121 Main St., Putnam, 860-963-0074 courthousebarandgrille.com. Open daily. L D LS (weekends), \$, WA

Fiesta Cinco De Mayo • Mexican A festive spot offering pollo salsa verde, carne asada and great guacamole. • 1228 Main St., Willimantic, 860-423-9524 fiestacincodemayo.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

The Flatbread Company, Canton • Pizza • EP Wood-fired, clay oven pizza made from organic and all-natural ingredients. • 110 Albany Turnpike #914, Canton, 860-693-3314 flatbreadcompany.com/canton/. Open daily. L, D, \$, WA

Golden Lamb Buttery • American • EP In a barn overlooking a 1,000-acre farm, dinner here might be roast duckling, chateaubriand or honey-glazed rack of lamb. • 199 Bush Hill Road, Brooklyn, 860-774-4423 thegoldenlamb.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L D (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$\$, E, WA

Hank's Restaurant • American A family place serving home-style chowders, lobster salad rolls and prime rib. • 416 Providence Road, Brooklyn, 860-774-6071 hanksrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$

The Heirloom Food Company • Vegan • EP Organic cafe & juice bar offering locally sourced, organic ingredients. • 630 N. Main St., Danielson, 860-779-3373 eatheirloomfood.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. B L, \$

The Inn at Woodstock Hill • American The menu at this historic estate includes shrimp-and-sea-scallop stir-fry and duckling à l'orange. • 94 Plaine Hill Road, Woodstock, 860-928-0528 woodstockhill.com. Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$\$, WA

The Mansion at Bald Hill • American The pan-seared diver scallops with jumbo shrimp is tops, and don't skip the lobster mac 'n' cheese. • 29 Plaine Road, South Woodstock, 860-974-3456 mansionatbaldhill.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

Someplace Special Pizza • Italian Serves Greek-style pizza, steaks, seafood and pastas at reasonable prices. • 58 Main St., Putnam, 860-928-2884 someplacespecialrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Sugar & Smoke Brazen BBQ • Barbecue This no-frills North Carolina-style BBQ joint uses an old-school smoker and hickory wood. • 74B School St., Putnam, 860-928-7842. Closed Sun. & Mon. L, \$

The Vanilla Bean Café • American Known for its homemade soups, award-winning chili, vegetarian dishes and desserts. • 450 Deerfield Road (Rtes. 44, 169 & 97), Pomfret, 860-928-1562 thevanillabeancafe.com. Open daily. B L D (Wed.-Sun.), \$\$, E, WA

Willimantic Brewing Co. / Main Street Café • Brew Pub This pioneering brewery is located within a historic U.S. Post Office building. Beers are brewed in full view of diners. Try the ale-steamed mussels. Other Connecticut craft beers available. • 967 Main St., Willimantic, 860-423-6777 willibrew.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D, \$\$\$, WA



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The Island Next Door

Puerto Rico and Connecticut After Hurricane Maria

All photos by
Ryan Caron King

When Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico in September of last year, the catastrophic damage left by the storm devastated the island and its residents. Over 1,600 miles away, roughly 8% of Connecticut's population claims Puerto Rican roots, many with family and friends living on the island.

▼ Paloma Ortiz is a nurse who has been offering volunteer health care to residents of a neighborhood in Canovanas. She comes because she sees health problems left unaddressed after Maria.



Because of this local impact, WNPR created *The Island Next Door* initiative. WNPR's News Director Jeff Cohen and Digital Reporter Ryan Caron King have traveled to the island to tell the stories of residents with ties to Connecticut and New England, ongoing efforts to rebuild after the hurricane, and the people who are coming to Connecticut seeking refuge with family and friends.

For more information about *The Island Next Door* and WNPR's ongoing coverage of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, visit theislandnextdoor.wnpr.org. Listen for reports on *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, *Where We Live*, and *NEXT*.

▼ Aida Garcia, the grandmother of Hartford resident and city Board of Education Member Robert Cotto Jr., stands outside of her home.



► Homes in Humacao — the part of the island where the hurricane first made landfall.

► At Casa Histórica de la Música Cayeyana — a non-profit house of music in Cayey — people come together on the weekends to sing, dance, and take a break from living through the continuing recovery.



What's On!

1.2018

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Her Duty. Her Passion.

Her Majesty.

Victoria on Masterpiece Returns This January on **cptv**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We at the Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network, home of Connecticut Public Television (CPTV) and Connecticut Public Radio (WNPR), are kicking off 2018 with some terrific news.

WNPR now has more listeners than ever! Over 300,000 people are tuning in to WNPR every week — an all-time high. In the Hartford area alone, we've nearly doubled our average audience share in the past eighteen months. In fact, WNPR is now consistently the number-one news station in its market overall, including during morning and afternoon "drive time," when our listeners are commuting to and from work. People are also listening for more time each week — up to an hour more, on average, since March 2016. What makes us especially excited is the diversity of our listenership, which is only increasing, as men and women of a variety of ages and racial and ethnic backgrounds tune in at higher rates. Whether you are a new or longtime WNPR listener, we thank you for tuning in!

Meanwhile, the news at CPTV and its sister station, CPTV Spirit, is great as well. In 2017, Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's *The Vietnam War* was seen by more than 33.8 million viewers across the nation. Its premiere episode was the most-streamed series premiere in PBS history. Because of great programming like *The Vietnam War*, our viewership for CPTV and CPTV Spirit is also up! We believe this trend will continue, as we have a wealth of exciting programming in store for 2018.

For instance, this January, beloved PBS series like *NOVA*, *Independent Lens*, *American Experience*, and *Nature* will feature new episodes. Plus, new series like *We'll Meet Again* with Ann Curry will premiere, as will the anticipated second season of the *Masterpiece* drama *Victoria*. Also kicking off is *The Public Television Feature Film Collection*. See a number of classic films, from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* to *Sunset Boulevard*, and many more in the coming months.

None of this wonderful news would be possible without you, our members. We are pleased to say that, as our audiences have increased, so has our membership. In fact, we recently reached a five-year high in our number of active members. We offer all of you our sincere thanks.

Jerry Franklin
President and CEO, Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network



"What's On!"

is published monthly as a supplement in Connecticut Magazine by Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network, 1049 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105. Connecticut Magazine, 100 Gando Drive, New Haven, CT 06513, is published monthly by Digital First Media, Lower Makefield Corporate Center, 790 Township Line Road, 3rd Floor, Yardley, PA 19067. Editorial content for "What's On!", the 16-page program guide devoted to CPTV and WNPR, is determined by Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network (CPBN), a nonprofit corporation chartered by the state of Connecticut.

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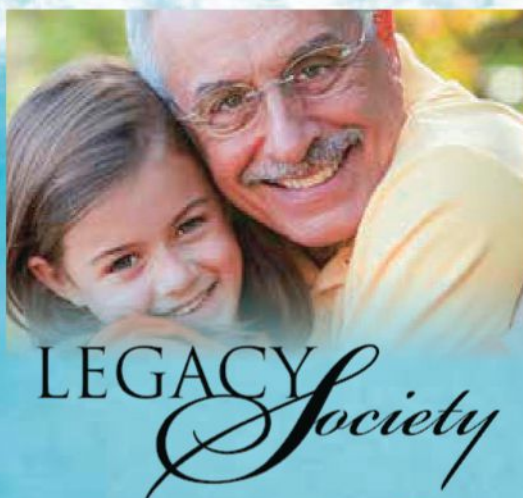
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Into the Amazon: American Experience

**Tuesday, January 9
at 9 p.m. on CPTV**

In 1914, President Theodore Roosevelt and legendary Brazilian explorer Candido Rondon made a perilous journey into the dark and deadly heart of the Amazon rainforest to chart an unknown river. What was anticipated to be a relatively tranquil journey turned out to be a brutal test of courage and character, claiming the lives of three men and almost killing the president.



We'll Meet Again

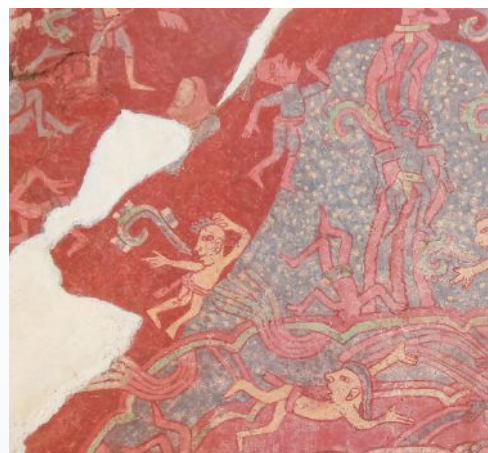
**Tuesdays at 8 p.m. beginning
January 23 on CPTV**

Join host Ann Curry for a new series featuring dramatic reunions of people whose lives crossed at pivotal moments. View history through their eyes and hear stories of heroism, hope, and the forging of unbreakable bonds.

Secrets of the Dead: Scanning the Pyramids

**Wednesday, January 24
at 10 p.m. on CPTV**

Travel with the scientific team granted unprecedented access by the Egyptian government to solve a 4,500-year-old mystery: what lies within the Great Pyramid at Giza? Using non-invasive technologies, they make a historic discovery.



Death on the Matterhorn

Monday, January 15 at 9 p.m. on CPTV Spirit

During the mid-19th century, ambitious climbers from Switzerland and Italy raced to be the first to the top of The Matterhorn. Using gripping re-enactments, visits to historical locations, and interviews with experts, discover what happened when four of the seven winning mountaineers fell to their deaths during the descent – a 150-year-old murder mystery.



MASTERPIECE VICTORIA

Her

Victoria on Masterpiece Returns This January on **cptv**



Although it has been more than 100 years since Queen Victoria ruled the throne, audiences had no trouble connecting with the British monarch when *Victoria on Masterpiece* premiered in early 2017. In fact, the first season drew more than 16.2 million viewers nationwide. This month, the young ruler returns for a highly anticipated second season of drama, romance, and intrigue, covering a portion of the queen's reign in the early 1840's.

Season 2 picks up six weeks after the birth of the queen and Prince Albert's first child, a daughter also named Victoria. Struggling with motherhood, Victoria is determined to return to active duty as ruler. Starring Jenna Coleman (*Doctor Who*) as the titular leader, the queen's expanding brood complicates her relationship with her husband, family, and subjects. The real-life queen had two babies by the time she was 21 and gave

birth to four children in five years, so there was certainly quite a bit to juggle.

Also returning for Season 2 is Tom Hughes (*Dancing on the Edge*), as the queen's smoldering consort, who against all expectations took the hand of the young queen and persevered to win over her skeptical subjects. As the season begins, Albert attempts to protect the queen from the increasingly desperate news regarding British soldiers in Afghanistan while also striving to find his own purpose in life.

"In [Season 1] Victoria married the handsome prince," creator and writer Daisy Goodwin explained, "but in [this season] she and Albert get down to the serious business of living happily, sometimes stormily, ever after. Victoria is the only Queen Regnant to marry and give birth while on the throne, and the challenges of being head of state as well as a wife and mother are legion."

Familiar faces from last season also include Rufus Sewell (*Man in the High*

Castle) as Lord Melbourne, Victoria's first Prime Minister and intimate friend, Nell Hudson (*Outlander*) as Nancy Skerrett, newly promoted to the queen's chief dresser, and Ferdinand Kingsley (*Borgia*) as Charles Francatelli, the royal chef whose love for Nancy was rebuffed at the end of Season 1.

As the Anglo-Afghan War unfolds abroad, and the catastrophic Irish potato famine begins to wreak havoc, Victoria's skills as a ruler are tested like never before. "My feeling is the most interesting part of her story is her early years," Goodwin continued. "She doesn't want to go on the mommy track ever. She wants to go back and get back to work."

What an extraordinary time to be Queen!

***Victoria on Masterpiece* returns for an all-new season Sundays at 9 p.m. beginning January 14 on CPTV. More information about *Victoria* can be found at cptv.org.**

Her Duty. Her Passion. *Majesty.*

Legendary Actress Dame Diana Rigg Joins Cast

New to the cast this season is celebrated actress Dame Diana Rigg (*Game of Thrones*, pictured left page, center), who plays Charlotte Montagu Douglas Scott, Duchess of Buccleuch, the court's new Mistress of the Robes. Serving as head mistress from 1841-1846, the duchess became quite close with the queen — so much so that Victoria served as godmother to Lady Charlotte's daughter (also named Victoria).



Prime Time | January 1-6

- CPTV Original, CPTV National Production or Presentation, or CPTV Co-production indicated in **blue font**.
- Program or episode premiere indicated by a **P**. Live broadcasts indicated by a **L**.
- Asterisk indicates that show begins prior to 8 p.m.; two asterisks indicate that show ends after 12 a.m. Visit CPTV.org/schedule for exact start and end times.
- This schedule is accurate as of press time; visit CPTV.org/schedule for the most up-to-date program schedule.

MON 1	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Knoxville, Part 1 Highlights include a Tiffany pottery vase.		Fake or Fortune - Renoir Philip Mould and Fiona Bruce investigate a painting hanging in a Welsh Castle.		Great Performances - From Vienna: The New Year's Celebration 2018 P Ring in the new year with the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna City Ballet.		Backstage Pass - Paul Keller... P	
CPTV Spirit	Born to Explore P	Curious Traveler	Fake or Fortune - A Mystery Old Master		Globe Trekker - Art Trails of the French Riviera		Rick Steves' Europe	Rick Steves' Europe
TUE 2	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Finding Your Roots, Season 4 - Unfamiliar Kin Christopher Walken and Carly Simon are guests.		Influenza 1918: American Experience Explore the devastating flu epidemic that ravaged America.		Frontline - Abacus: Small Enough to Jail Only one U.S. bank was prosecuted after the financial crisis.		Playing by the Rules: Ethics at Work	Playing by the Rules: Ethics at Work
CPTV Spirit	NOVA - Extreme Animal Weapons Learn about claws, horns, and fangs.		Time Scanners - Colosseum Rome's Colosseum is explored.		Secrets of the Dead - Nero's Sunken City		William Shatner Presents: Chaos on the Bridge	
WED 3	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Snow Monkeys Meet the Japanese macaque, which can survive in subzero temperatures.		NOVA - Invisible Universe Revealed The Hubble Space Telescope is explored.		Aurora: Fire in the Sky Explore the colorful glow that brightens the sky in Earth's polar regions.		Counting from Infinity: Yitang Zhang and the Twin Prime Conjecture	
CPTV Spirit	The Italian Americans - La Famiglia		The Italian Americans - Becoming Americans		Independent Lens - The Untold Tales of Armistead Maupin P		Arts in Context	
THU 4	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Dr. Blake Mysteries - The Open Road A mechanic is found dead underneath a car.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - When You're Smiling P Sarah and Roy go to Sydney.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - Home to Roost P Elizabeth seizes the chance to battle Regina.		Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV Spirit	Start Up	Craftsman's Legacy	This Old House Hour P Tom makes a jig for a shingled flair detail.		The Great British Baking Show, Season 3 - Part 2: Biscuits		The Great British Baking Show, Season 3 - Masterclass 4	
FRI 5	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Blood Wedding, Part 2 A maid of honor's murder is investigated.		Grantchester, Season 3 on Masterpiece - Part 1 A would-be groom is found dead.		Grantchester, Season 3 on Masterpiece - Part 2 A dead bird makes an unsettling appearance.		Great Performances - Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga: Cheek to Cheek Live!	
CPTV Spirit	Variety Studio: Actors on Actors Guests include Tom Hanks.		Public Television Feature Film Collection - Breakfast at Tiffany's P Playgirl Holly Golightly (Audrey Hepburn) puzzles a writer (George Peppard).		Science Goes to the Movies		On Story	
SAT 6	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Public Television Feature Film Collection - Sorry, Wrong Number P An heiress (Barbara Stanwyck) calls her husband and overhears men plotting a murder.		Hollywood Idols - Barbara Stanwyck		Fake or Fortune - Churchill & Munnings Two paintings may be by leading figures of the 20th century.		The Dr. Blake Mysteries - The Open Road (See CPTV, Jan. 4 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	800 Words, Season 2 - Part 1 P George and Arlo have a plan.		The Bletchley Circle, Season 2 - Blood on Their Hands, Part 1		Hinterland, Season 2 - Dark River, Part 1 P		Endeavour, Season 4 on Masterpiece - Canticle**	



Wild Venice

Sunday, January 7 at 9 p.m. on CPTV Spirit

With its picturesque palaces, churches, and canals, Venice is one of the most scenic and romantic destinations in the world. Using magnificent atmospheric photography, this documentary reveals the unexpected natural glories of the world's most beautiful man-made environment.

Prime Time | January 7-12

SUN 7	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Victoria, Season 1 on Masterpiece - The Queen's Husband Albert finds a noble cause.		Victoria, Season 1 on Masterpiece - Engine of Change Victoria must choose a regent.		Victoria, Season 1 on Masterpiece - Young England Victoria wanders outside the palace walls.		Midsomer Murders - Blood Wedding, Part 2 (See CPTV, Jan. 5 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	Nature - Wild France Meet wolves, bears, and more in France's forests.		Wild Venice P Explore Venice through atmospheric photography.		Rare: Creatures of the Photo Ark - Part 1		My Wild Affair - The Rhino Who Joined the Family	
MON 8	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Harrisburg, Part 1 P Items include a Pennsylvania Dutch coffeepot.		Antiques Roadshow - Knoxville, Part 2 A collection of letters from Amelia Earhart is appraised.		Young Victoria The true story of Queen Victoria's path to the throne shows that it was not easy.		Fake or Fortune - Churchill & Munnings (See CPTV, Jan. 6 at 10 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	Born to Explore P	Curious Traveler	I'll Have What Phil's Having - Italy Phil samples gelato and more.		In the Footsteps of Marco Polo A photographer and a former Marine retrace Polo's 25,000-mile path.		Rick Steves' Europe	
TUE 9	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Finding Your Roots, Season 4 - Puritans & Pioneers Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen are guests.		Into the Amazon: American Experience P Follow the remarkable story of the journey taken by President Theodore Roosevelt and Brazilian explorer Cândido Rondon into the heart of the South American rain forest.		Glober Trekker - Tough Boats: The Amazon			
CPTV Spirit	NOVA - Bird Brain Birds are leading humans to rethink intelligence.		Nature - Animal Homes: The Nest Nests come in all shapes and sizes.		NOVA - Secrets of the Forbidden City		Making a Buck in Beijing P Follow two Americans to Beijing.	
WED 10	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Yosemite Global climate changes are affecting one of America's greatest wildernesses.		NOVA - Black Hole Apocalypse P Join astrophysicist Janna Levin on a mind-bending journey to the frontiers of black hole research. Discover how scientists may soon be able to "see" a black hole.		Antiques Roadshow - Harrisburg, Part 1 (See CPTV, Jan. 8 at 8 p.m.)			
CPTV Spirit	The Italian Americans - Loyal Americans		The Italian Americans - The American Dream		Independent Lens - Unrest P Follow a filmmaker as she struggles with chronic fatigue syndrome.		Second Opinion	
THU 11	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Dr. Blake Mysteries - Golden Years A businessman is found drowned after he unveils big plans.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - Happy Days Are Here Again P A plan is formed to destroy Regina.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - The Trouble with Harry P Olivia and Elizabeth try to protect James.		Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV Spirit	Start Up	Craftsman's Legacy	This Old House Hour P Kevin visits a home with pine trim.		The Great British Baking Show, Season 3 - Part 3: Bread		Martha Bakes	French Chef Classics
FRID 12	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Shot at Dawn, Part 1 A rivalry between two families turns violent.		Grantchester, Season 3 on Masterpiece - Part 3 Villagers fall ill at a local cricket match.		Tony Bennett: The Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song P Enjoy an all-star tribute to singer Tony Bennett filmed in Washington, D.C.		Backstage Pass - Best of Jazz P	
CPTV Spirit	Variety Studio: Actors on Actors Guests include Natalie Portman.		Public Television Feature Film Collection - Sorry, Wrong Number (See CPTV, Jan. 6 at 8 p.m.)			Unlocking Sherlock Get a look inside the world of Sherlock Holmes.		On Story



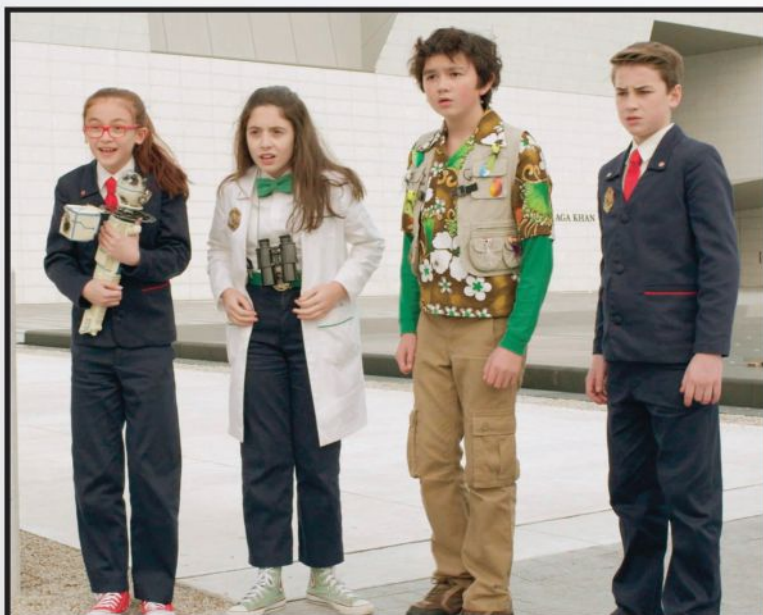
Tony Bennett: The Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song

Friday, January 12 at 10 p.m. on CPTV

Celebrate the career of beloved singer and entertainer Tony Bennett as he receives the Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song. Featuring performances by Bennett as well as Chris Botti, Michael Bublé, Gloria Estefan, Michael Feinstein, and others, this extraordinary evening honors the achievements of this musical icon.

Prime Time | January 13-18

SAT 13	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Viewers' Favorites* (Start: 7:30 p.m.) Sit back and relax with a special presentation from CPTV.		Public Television Feature Film Collection - Sunset Boulevard A screenwriter moves in with a Hollywood has-been and her chauffeur. William Holden and Gloria Swanson star.			The Dr. Blake Mysteries - Golden Years (See CPTV, Jan. 11 at 8 p.m.)		
CPTV Spirit	800 Words, Season 2 - Part 2 All of Weld bids farewell to Jan.		The Bletchley Circle, Season 2 - Blood on Their Hands, Part 2		Hinterland, Season 2 - Dark River, Part 2		Endeavour, Season 4 on Masterpiece - Lazaretto**	
SUN 14	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Victoria, Season 1 on Masterpiece - Young England (See CPTV, Jan. 7 at 10 p.m.)		Victoria, Season 2 on Masterpiece - A Soldier's Daughter/Green-Eyed Monster New mother Victoria wants to return to the business of ruling a nation. Albert tries to protect her from increasingly desperate news.			Young Victoria (See CPTV, Jan. 8 at 10 p.m.)		
CPTV Spirit	Nature - Honey Badgers: Masters of Mayhem		Nature - Leave It to Beavers Beavers can revive landscapes.		Rare: Creatures of the Photo Ark - Part 2		Big Burn: American Experience The deadly 1910 wildfire is explored.	
MON 15	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Harrisburg, Part 2 Finds include a Charles "Heinie" Wagner Red Sox archive.		Independent Lens - I Am Not Your Negro This documentary showcases writer James Baldwin's crucial observations on American race relations.			Independent Lens - American Denial The power of unconscious bias is explored.		Unlearning: Breaking Bias, Building...
CPTV Spirit	Born to Explore	Curious Traveler	Death on the Matterhorn In 1865, climbers fell to their deaths.		Richard Bangs' Adventures with Purpose - Geneva & the...		Rick Steves' Europe	Rick Steves' Europe
TUE 16	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Finding Your Roots, Season 4 - Black Like Me Bryant Gumbel and others learn about their ancestry.		Secrets of Tuxedo Park: American Experience Explore the remarkable life of Alfred Lee Loomis.		Frontline - Rape on the Night Shift Sexual abuse of undocumented women is investigated.		Independent Lens - India's Daughter A woman's murder sparked a movement for change.	
CPTV Spirit	NOVA - Secret Tunnel Warfare Unearth traces of a WWI operation.		WWII Mega Weapons - The Tunnels of Okinawa		USS Indianapolis Live - From the Deep		Nazi Mega Weapons - Mega Ships	
WED 17	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Arctic Wolf Pack Meet the white wolf, one of the most hardened predators on the planet.		NOVA - Hagia Sophia: Istanbul's Ancient Mystery Hagia Sophia's dome has a unique structure.		Understanding the Opioid Epidemic Stories of people impacted by opioid use are shared.		Antiques Roadshow - Harrisburg, Part 2 (See CPTV, Jan. 15 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	The Great War: American Experience - Part 1 Learn the complex story of WWI through the voices of nurses, aviators, "doughboys," and others.				Independent Lens - I Am Not Your Negro (See CPTV, Jan. 15 at 9 p.m.)			John Lewis: Get in the Way**
THU 18	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Dr. Blake Mysteries - Lucky Numbers Blake waits for the perfect moment to propose to Jean.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - You're Just in Love Jack and Carolyn's big day arrives.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - There'll Be Some Changes Made Jack and Carolyn visit Douglas.		Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV Spirit	Start Up	Craftsman's Legacy	This Old House Hour Liz makes a stained glass window.		The Great British Baking Show, Season 3 - Part 4: Desserts		Martha Bakes	French Chef Classics



Odd Squad: World Turned Odd

Monday, January 15
at 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on CPTV Kids

When Oona, Olympia, and Otis accidentally change the past, they undo every odd case that Odd Squad has ever solved. The agents then must embark on a new mission across time to set things right.



Prime Time | January 19-24

FRI 19	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Shot at Dawn, Part 2 (See CPTV, Jan. 12 at 8 p.m.)		Grantchester, Season 3 on Masterpiece - Part 4 A case involves post office robberies and murder.		Lorraine Hansberry: American Masters Award-winning filmmaker Tracy Heather Strain examines Lorraine Hansberry's life and work using archival footage, home movies, rare photos, and unpublished documents.			
CPTV Spirit	Variety Studio: Actors on Actors See Adam Sandler and more.		Public Television Feature Film Collection - Sunset Boulevard (See CPTV, Jan. 13 at 9 p.m.)			Science Goes to the Movies		On Story
SAT 20	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Public Television Feature Film Collection - To Catch a Thief A retired cat burglar sees fireworks with an American heiress on the Riviera. Cary Grant and Grace Kelly star.				You Are Cordially Invited - Highclere...	You Are Cordially Invited - Blenheim...	The Dr. Blake Mysteries - Lucky Numbers (See CPTV, Jan. 18 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	800 Words, Season 2 - Part 3 George uncovers a mystery.		The Bletchley Circle, Season 2 - Uncustomed Goods, Part 1		Hinterland, Season 2 - The Sound of Souls, Part 1		Endeavour, Season 4 on Masterpiece - Harvest**	
SUN 21	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Victoria, Season 2 on Masterpiece - A Soldier's Daughter/ Green-Eyed...* (Start: 7 p.m.)		Victoria, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Warp & Weft/The Sins of the Father Discontent is growing in the country. An unexpected grief finally forces Victoria to put childish things away.			Fake or Fortune - L.S. Lowry Three small paintings believed to be by L.S. Lowry are examined.		
CPTV Spirit	Nature - Charlie & the Curious Otters		Nature - Yosemite (See CPTV, Jan. 10 at 8 p.m.)		Rare: Creatures of the Photo Ark - Part 3		Death on the Matterhorn (See CPTV Spirit, Jan. 15 at 9 p.m.)	
MON 22	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Harrisburg, Part 3 The NASA archive of Pearl Tucker is appraised.		This Is the House That Jack Built John F. Kennedy's early years and lasting legacy are chronicled.		Independent Lens - The Force The long-troubled Oakland Police Department struggles to confront federal demands for reform.			The Open Mind
CPTV Spirit	Born to Explore	Samantha Brown's...	The Story of China - Ancestors/Silk Roads & China Ships Explore China's early history and visit a festival devoted to ancient gods.				Reaching West: Dreams of China's New Generation	
TUE 23	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	We'll Meet Again - Children of WWII Ann Curry hosts the reunions of people separated by WWII.		Frontline - Exodus Hear the first-person stories of refugees and migrants fleeing war and persecution for Europe.			The Arab Americans The contributions made by Arab-American immigrants are illustrated.		
CPTV Spirit	NOVA - The Day the Dinosaurs Died		Nature - Raising the Dinosaur Giant		Bones of Badger Hole, A Time Team America Presentation		History Detectives	
WED 24	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Animal Misfits Meet odd and unlikely creatures that might seem ill-equipped for survival.		NOVA - Petra: Lost City of Stone Experts explore how the ancient people of Petra built a city of stone.		Secrets of the Dead - Scanning the Pyramids What lies within the Great Pyramid of Khufu?		Antiques Roadshow - Harrisburg, Part 3 (See CPTV, Jan. 22 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	The Great War: American Experience - Part 2 (See CPTV Spirit, Jan. 17 at 8 p.m.)				Independent Lens - The Force (See CPTV, Jan. 22 at 10 p.m.)			Color of Justice Revisited



Lorraine Hansberry: American Masters

Friday, January 19
at 10 p.m. on CPTV

On March 11, 1959, Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* opened on Broadway and changed the face of American theater forever. In this new documentary, award-winning filmmaker Tracy Heather Strain examines Hansberry's life and work using a remarkable collection of archival footage, home movies, rare photos, and unpublished documents.

Prime Time | January 25-31

THU 25	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Dr. Blake Mysteries - Against the Odds A jockey dies the morning after a big win.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - Where Will the Baby's Dimple Be? P Sarah goes into labor.		A Place to Call Home, Season 4 - And the Blind Shall See P Anna pushes Gino beyond his limit.		Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV Spirit	Start Up	Craftsman's Legacy	This Old House Hour P Norm installs an old door.		The Great British Baking Show, Season 3 - Part 5: Alternative...		Martha Bakes	French Chef Classics
FRI 26	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Left for Dead, Part 1 A psychic discovers a couple murdered in their home.		Grantchester, Season 3 on Masterpiece - Part 5 A woman's death is covered up.		The Kate - Darlene Love The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductee performs "He's a Rebel" and more.		The Kate - Kiefer Sutherland The actor and musician performs outlaw country/Americana-inspired songs.	
CPTV Spirit	Variety Studio: Actors on Actors P Gal Gadot and others appear.		Public Television Feature Film Collection - To Catch a Thief (See CPTV, Jan. 20 at 8 p.m.)				Science Goes to the Movies	On Story
SAT 27	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Viewers' Favorites* (Start: 7:30 p.m.) Enjoy one of CPTV's most popular specials.		Public Television Feature Film Collection - Breakfast at Tiffany's (See CPTV Spirit, Jan. 5 at 9 p.m.)			The Dr. Blake Mysteries - Against the Odds (See CPTV, Jan. 25 at 8 p.m.)		
CPTV Spirit	800 Words, Season 2 - Part 4 P George's house is full of teens.		The Bletchley Circle, Season 2 - Uncustomed Goods, Part 2		Hinterland, Season 2 - Part 10 P Mathias deals with a feuding family.		Worricker: Turks & Caicos on Masterpiece**	
SUN 28	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Victoria, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Warp & Weft/The Sins of the Father* (Start: 7 p.m.)		Victoria, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Entente Cordiale P Victoria takes a trip to France.		Queen Elizabeth's Secret Agents - Part 1 P Queen Elizabeth I's spy master intercepts a conspiracy.		Midsomer Murders - Left for Dead, Part 1 (See CPTV, Jan. 26 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	Nature - The Cheetah Children Follow a cheetah family.		Nature - The Story of Cats: Asia to Africa		Nature - The Story of Cats: Into the Americas		Shelter Me - Community Matters Stories about shelter pets are told.	
MON 29	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - New Orleans, Part 1 P Journey to the Big Easy to see hidden treasures.		Antiques Roadshow - Knoxville, Part 3 Highlights include a third edition of Gone with the Wind.		Understanding the Opioid Epidemic (See CPTV, Jan. 17 at 10 p.m.)		Frontline - Chasing Heroin** Should heroin use be treated like a public health crisis, not a crime?	
CPTV Spirit	Born to Explore P	Samantha Brown's... P	The Story of China - Golden Age/The Ming The achievements of two of China's most brilliant dynasties, the Song and the Ming, are explored.				POV - Ai Weiwei: The Fake Case The Chinese artist is profiled.	
TUE 30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	We'll Meet Again - Rescued from Mount St. Helens P Meet survivors of Mount St. Helens' eruption.		State of the Union Address L PBS NewsHour provides live coverage of President Donald Trump's State of the Union Address.				Antiques Roadshow - Knoxville, Part 3 (See CPTV, Jan. 29 at 9 p.m.)	
CPTV Spirit	Secrets of Spanish Florida, A Secrets of the Dead Special Follow the history of Spanish colonists who settled in Florida in 1565.				The Mystery of Chaco Canyon The canyon's secrets are explored.		Lost Pueblo Village, A Time Team America Presentation	
WED 31	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Animals with Cameras, Part 1 P Get a unique inside look at the animal kingdom.		NOVA - The Impossible Flight P Follow two intrepid pilots overcoming countless challenges as they construct and fly the first solar-powered airplane around the world.			Antiques Roadshow - New Orleans, Part 1 (See CPTV, Jan. 29 at 8 p.m.)		
CPTV Spirit	The Great War: American Experience - Part 3 (See CPTV Spirit, Jan. 17 at 8 p.m.)				Independent Lens - I Am Another You P A drifter leaves a comfortable home for a cross-cultural road trip.			Film School Shorts



Queen Elizabeth's Secret Agents

Sundays at 10 p.m. beginning
January 28 on CPTV

Uncover the secret spy network that helped keep Queen Elizabeth I in power for over 40 years. Join leading historians as they explore details of the world's first secret service and dissect the minds and motivations of key players from the period.



Prosecco Gone Wild

From Faith:

We're big believers in dressing up sparkling wine or champagne. Senior Contributor Alex Province and his husband, Matt, hand guests flutes of sparkling wine with raspberries floating in the glass. Or they jazz up Prosecco with a drizzle of the Italian aperitif Aperol and top that with a splash of sparkling water. They know how to start a party!

Here's another wild way with Prosecco: Add hibiscus. Cocktail Contributor Anthony DeSerio invented a sparkling cocktail that is both gorgeous and festive. Float a sweet, edible hibiscus flower in each glass for drama.

Faith

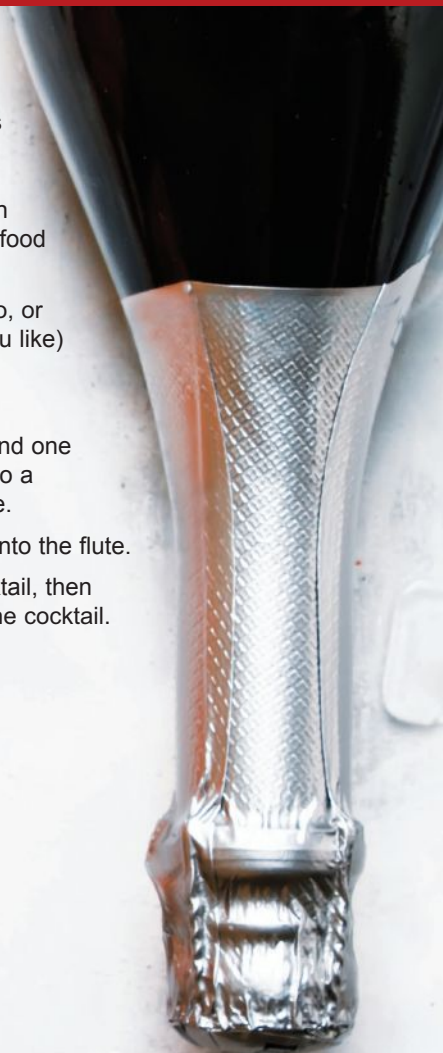
INGREDIENTS

½ oz. wild hibiscus syrup and 1 flower (from a jar of Wild Hibiscus Flowers in Syrup, at gourmet food stores or online)

Prosecco (Mionetto, or whatever brand you like)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add the syrup and one hibiscus flower to a champagne flute.
2. Pour Prosecco into the flute.
3. Admire the cocktail, then enjoy. Makes one cocktail.



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Hartford's Puerto Rican Godmother

IN THE MIDST OF SOCIAL UNREST, 'LA MADRINA' MARIA SÁNCHEZ PROMOTED CALM AND UNDERSTANDING

Hartford was burning.

In the late summer of 1969, long-simmering racial tensions in the city erupted in a series of often violent riots and clashes between members of the city's Puerto Rican community and French Canadians. The riots had originally started on the evening of Aug. 10 when rumors began flying through the South Green neighborhood that members of the Comancheros, a white motorcycle gang, had assaulted a Puerto Rican elderly person the previous night at a popular Comanchero hangout.

In a paper about the riots published in the *Journal of American History*, Jose E. Cruz writes: "Crowds gathered, fights broke out, rocks and Molotov cocktails flew. The first arrests were all Puerto Rican and this incensed the already angry rioters. Cars were set ablaze. ... someone broke into a mattress company, setting between twenty and thirty mattresses on fire. The motorcycle gang was seen in the area throughout the night but no members were arrested."

A calming force amid this maelstrom of anger and injustice was a woman named Maria Sánchez. Known as "La Madrina" (The Godmother), Sánchez arrived in Hartford in 1954 at age 28. She had left her parents and five siblings in Comerío, Puerto Rico, in the hopes of creating a better life for herself on the U.S. mainland. Armed with only an eighth-grade education, she found work where she could, including in tobacco fields outside Hartford. Ultimately, she saved enough money to open her own storefront, Maria's News Stand, at 238 Albany Ave. The spot became a gathering place for community involvement, while Sánchez became a friendly ear and impassioned advocate for the under-represented Puerto Rican community.

Lena Harwood Pacheco, education manager at the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame, into which Sánchez was inducted in 1994, says, "Maria really served as a listener and a mentor to everyone in her neighborhood and they saw her almost as a member of their extended family."

Pacheco says that during the Comanchero

riots, "Maria was able to both help calm the rioting itself [and] also advocate for those who felt the need to riot by understanding the underlying causes of their unrest."

In *Maria Sánchez: Godmother of the Puerto Rican Community* published by *Connecticut Explored*, a nonprofit magazine dedicated to Connecticut history, Cruz writes that "at one point during the disturbances, Sánchez placated a crowd of nearly 150 young men gathered at the intersection of Park and Main streets. She then brokered a meeting for the community to air its complaints and concerns. Participants included City Councilman Nicholas Carbone and City Manager Elisha Freedman. During the meeting, held at the South Green Multiservice Center on Main Street, Puerto Ricans told stories of police brutality, of being arrested in disproportionate numbers and without cause, and of being mistreated even when they tried to assist the police. Another councilman present, George Athanson, urged Puerto Ricans to run a candidate for city council."

**Sánchez became
a friendly ear
and impassioned
advocate for the
under-represented
Puerto Rican
community.**

The meeting didn't fully ease tensions; rioting would intensify shortly afterward when *The Hartford Times* published an article that included racist comments from two unnamed city residents. As the rioting continued, Puerto Rican residents were joined by members of the city's black community, who had been angered by the shooting of a 16-year-old black teenager by West Hartford police and a tenement fire in a black neighborhood that killed three. In all, \$1.17 million in damages were incurred, 67 stores were looted, a police officer was shot and 133 people were arrested, according to Cruz.

Despite the continued unrest, Sánchez's role in the riots was not for naught. "During the riot, The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving announced that it would donate \$78,640 to the Greater Hartford Community Council to address Puerto Rican needs," Cruz writes.

Sánchez helped to ensure this money went to a variety of civic



Maria Sánchez: A calming force in Hartford's dark days
PHOTO: CONNECTICUT WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

organizations aimed at supporting Puerto Ricans. After the riots she continued to be a voice for her community. She advocated successfully for the state's first bilingual school, La Escuelita, which opened in 1972. A year later, Sánchez ran for a seat on the Hartford Board of Education and won, serving in that position for 16 years. In 1988 she became the first Hispanic woman elected to the Connecticut General Assembly. She died suddenly a year later in 1989, but her legacy continues to inspire.

In addition to her induction into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame, the Maria C. Sánchez Elementary School in Hartford was dedicated in 1991. Two years later Sánchez was commemorated in the Hartford Public Library's Plaza of Fame. This fall her story was featured as part of *Where I Live, Connecticut*, a kid-friendly textbook and web resource created by *Connecticut Explored* and Connecticut educators that is geared at helping teachers implement the state's history into their third- and fourth-grade classes.

However, Pacheco says there is much of Sánchez's legacy "that maybe we have not honored or celebrated enough." She notes that La Escuelita eventually closed. "That's an interesting thing in this political time, and in this time when people are migrating more from Puerto Rico given the recent hurricane. I think it's interesting to think about what role bilingual education may play in our future." ■

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